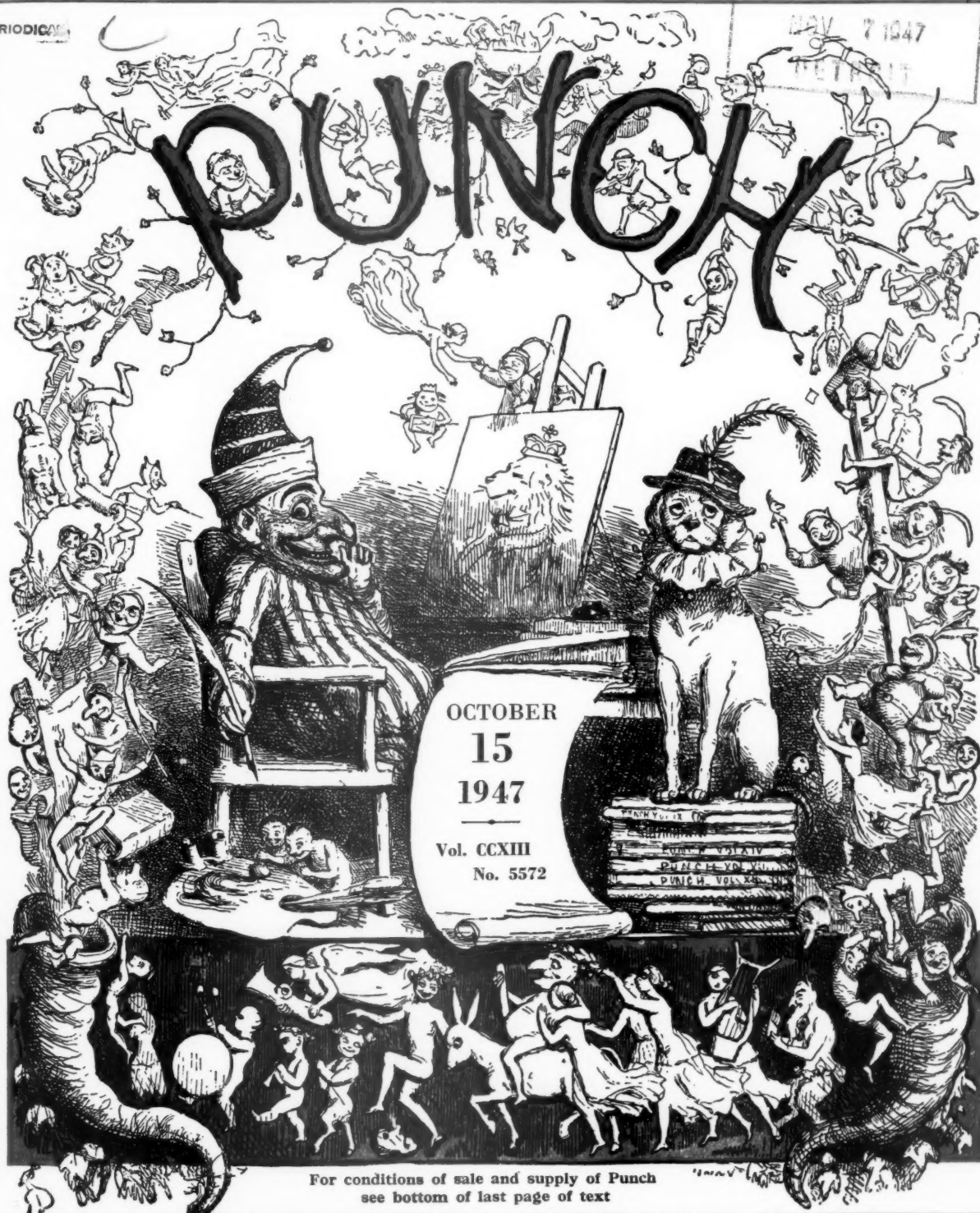


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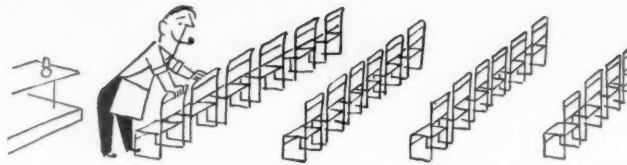
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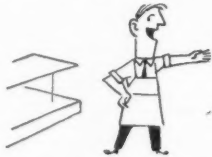
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see bottom of last page of text

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Reg'd

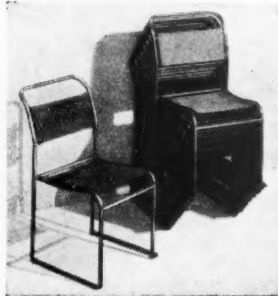


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*And here
we pick up
pearls*

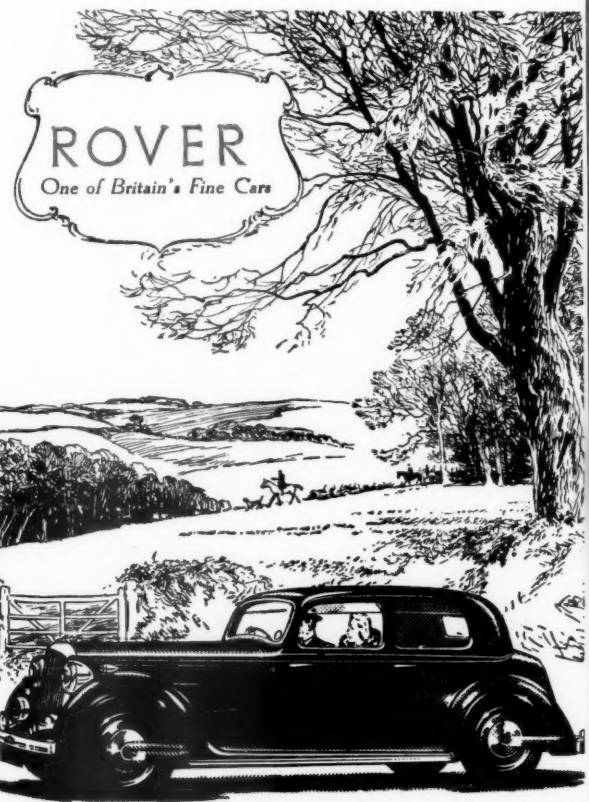
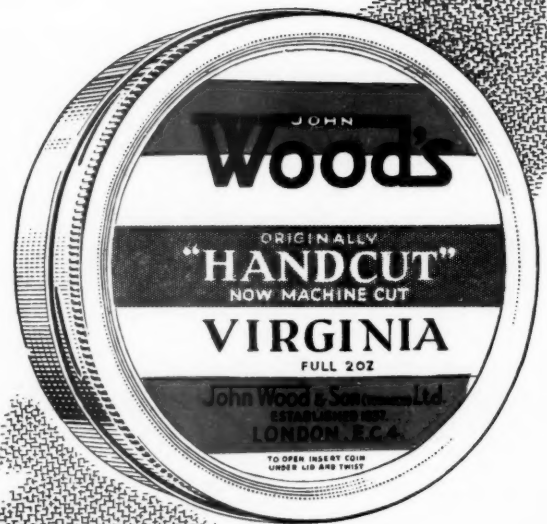
Not many hours ago the Speedbird lay at Poole. Now it's Bahrein, in the Persian Gulf, and the pearl merchants are coming aboard. Bound for Karachi with the season's catch. A routine trip these days in the pearling business.

So all along the routes, the Speedbirds are fitting into the pattern of things; modifying old habits here and there — but making new friends for Britain.

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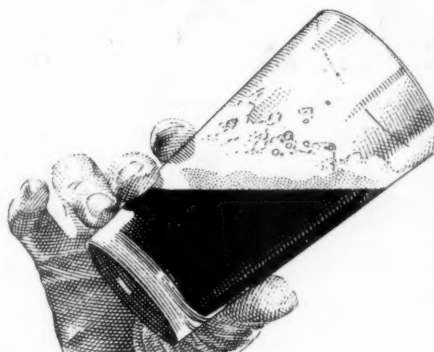
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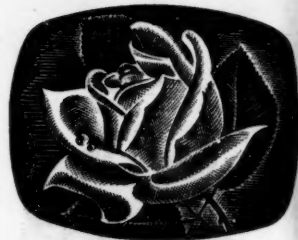
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HAIR GRIPS

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Freshness

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Euthymol

TOOTHPASTE

FROM ALL CHEMISTS

THE MARCH OF LIGHT



*Dr. Johnson had
to write his
dictionary by
candlelight...*

we all have

Osram

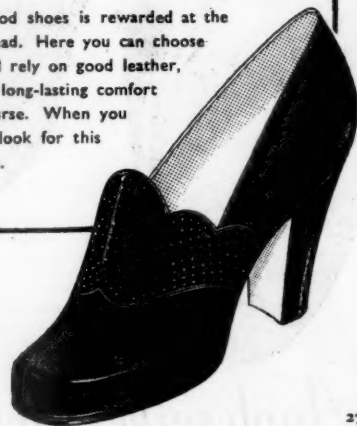
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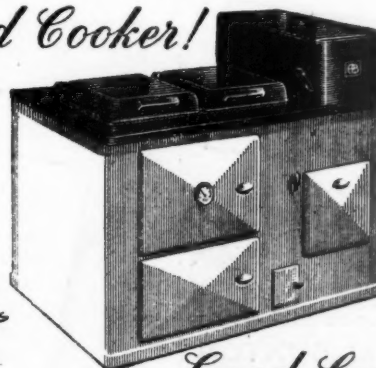
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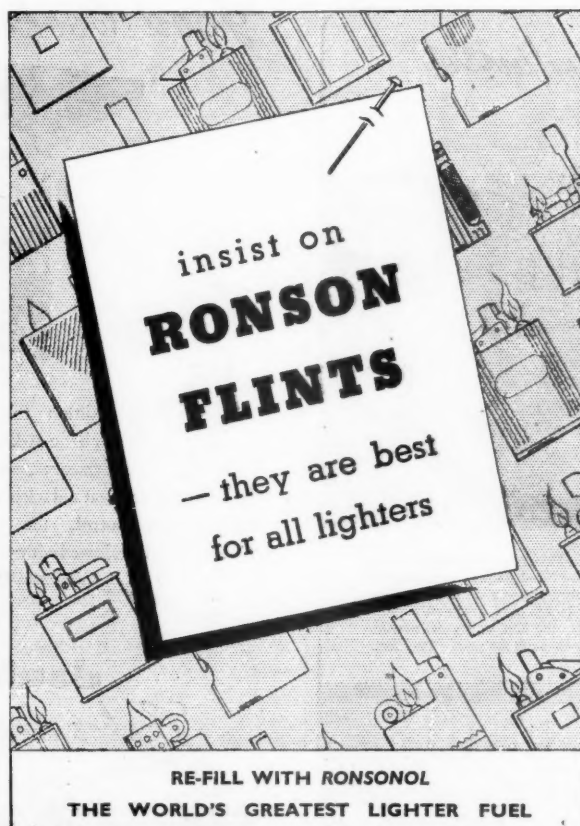
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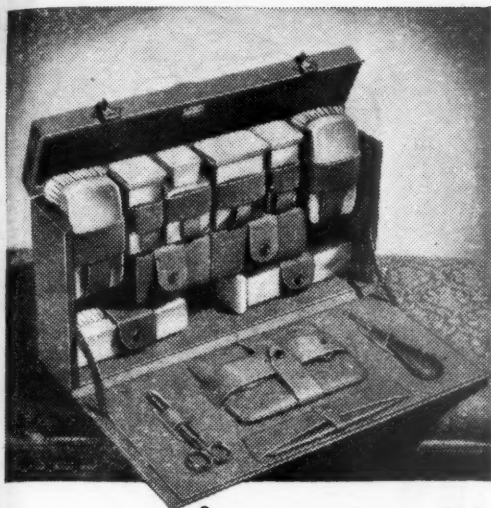


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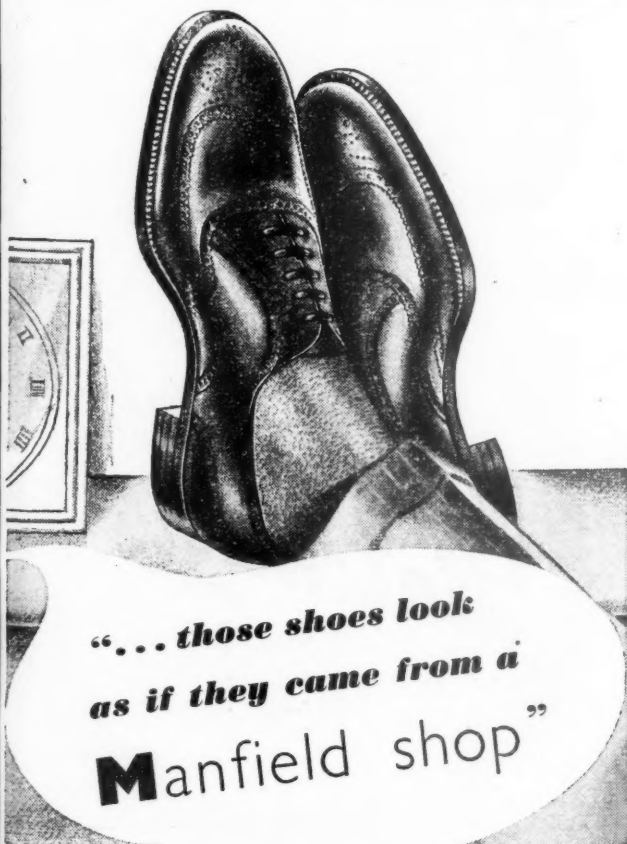
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The filter tip that prevents any bits of tobacco entering the mouth is the extra refinement that adds to the enjoyment of smoking.

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You've left something
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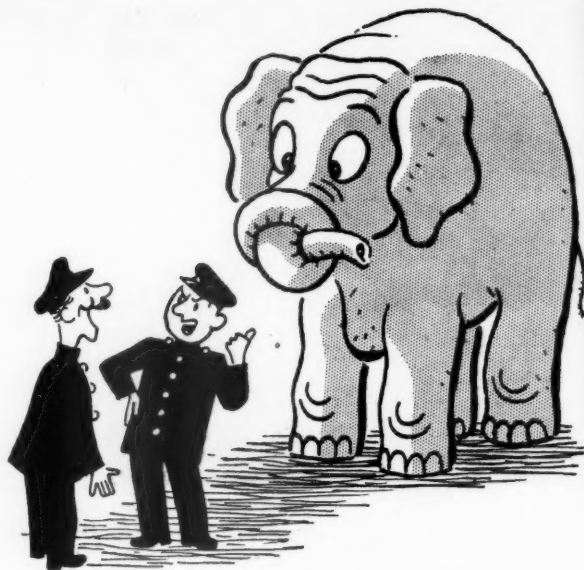
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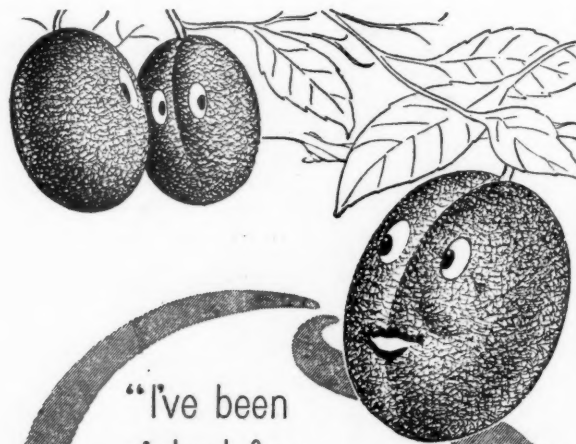


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"I've been
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Batchelor's
REC'D

where the
best Plums go!"

BP-19/96



PUNCH

Or

The London Charivari



Vol. CCXIII No. 5572

October 15 1947

Charivaria

It is reported that when an "almost human" machine was due to be demonstrated recently it refused to work. We understand that the inventors regard even this as falling something short of perfection.

A Worcester scoutmaster made a perfect eleven-foot canoe from an old sail at a total cost of ninepence. That is, 8½d. without the tar.

Food Flash

"To protect the eyes when peeling onions, dip them for a moment in boiling water. Then begin at the roots and peel upwards."

"Vancouver Daily Province."

A Chicago gangster known as Hip-Pocket Harry has given up crime owing to increased weight. He never carries a gun now. That ominous bulge in his suit is only Harry.

"The — Hotel was reopened for business last Whitsuntide. It is in first-class condition, and business more than up to expectations. The liquid assets speak for themselves..."

Report of chairman's speech in daily paper.

But is the balance all that it should be?

"Newly qualified medicos know that even the basements of Harley Street are not available," says a doctor. Or, for that matter, the garrets of Wimpole Street.

"Excellent meals *can* be obtained if you know where to go," says a correspondent. He claims to have found a restaurant where food is fully up to war-time standard.

A speedway rider has left the track to join a football team. He will naturally be expected to take all the corners.

Twenty pounds of tobacco have been grown by a St. Albans woman from a six-penny packet of seeds. We hope the Chancellor won't take it as a challenge to get more out of a packet.

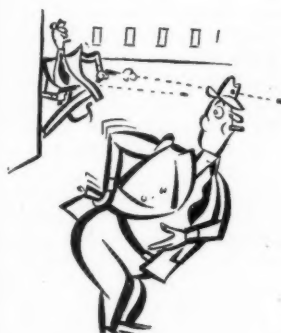
American women have formed an organization to resist new long-skirt fashions. The badge is worn on the garter.

A manufacturing concern advertises a burglar-proof, lockless door. There must be a catch in it somewhere.

"The ancient industry of peat-digging around the hamlet of Toys Hill, near Sevenoaks, is likely to close down at the end of the year because there is no more peat to dig."—*Evening News*.

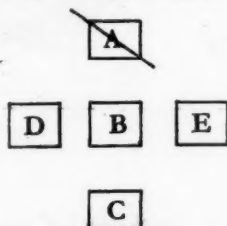
Oh, come—that's sheer defeatism.

A successful demonstration of table-rapping was given in London recently. Awed spectators report that several thunderous knocks were followed by the materialization of an indignant waitress.



Reconstruction

THE newly announced changes in the Cabinet are accompanied by changes in its shape which require a certain amount of explanation for those who have not followed closely the intricacy of administrative procedure during the past few years. They can perhaps be best explained by a simple diagram—



where A represents the older or basic Cabinet, now superseded, B the essential, and C the supplementary Cabinet, whilst D and E are offshoots rendered necessary by the demand for obtaining swift decisions on the side.

The actual numbers of the essential Cabinet remain practically unaltered except for the sharing of the same seat by the Lord Privy Seal and the New Secretary of State for War, and the promotion of the Minister of Perplexity to an equal position at the end of the table with the President of the Board of Permits and Controls except on wet Friday afternoons.

At the same time each of these functionaries becomes chairman of an extraordinary consultative committee co-ordinating investigations into economic potentialities with bilateral responsibility for the continuous production of forms. The actual members of these committees have no seats in the Essential Cabinet except in the case on one hand of oil and bricks, and on the other of whale oil and wool. Timber has a watching brief in both.

And now for the changes in personnel. It is thought by the Prime Minister that by summoning these three Cabinets to function at the same time interdependently

and all together, considerable progress will be made in the harmonizing of deliberative procedure in conjunction with tautological effect.

The overall integration of the four Cabinets will be entrusted to the Minister for Austerity, who will also deputize for the Lord President of the Council and Scotland, if required. Undoubtedly there have been certain hardships for individuals. The Minister of National Absenteeism for instance, drops out of the Cabinet, but is compensated in some measure by adding to his duties the part-time superintendence of Commonwealth Relations and Jam: and a good deal of regret will be felt on personal grounds at the resignation of the aged Minister of Communications who has for so long been combining the offices of Town and Country Planning with Air.

But the transfusion of new blood will be welcomed. This is secured by the promotion to the Post Office of the brilliant young Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Anthracite, and the accession to sub-Cabinet rank of Joint Secretary for Underlinen, who has hitherto been chiefly in the public eye as the Hotspur of Fats and Lard.

Perhaps the most remarkable new appointment is that of a General Public Relations Officer, with full Cabinet rank, charged with the duty of endearing the Government as a whole to the tax-payer, and at the same time supervising the work of the publicity officers of the separate departments. It will be his task to see that neither in films nor newspapers will the home life of one Minister be more fully and beautifully portrayed than that of another; and that all aphorisms, epigrams and slogans are properly shared.

It is an open secret that Mr. Aneurin Bevan was asked to accept this post but felt compelled to refuse it. It was then offered to Mr. Shinwell, but he also declined. The actual name will therefore not be announced until next week.

Taken as a whole we can only regard the alterations as a step in the right direction and an earnest of more to follow. No Cabinet can last for ever without reconstitution and ripeness is all.

EVOE.

GEORGE BELCHER

THE work of George Belcher was in one respect unique: where practically every other humorous artist aims, as it were, at making caricatures of the commonplace, he set out to produce serious portraits of the out-of-the-ordinary and unusual. In consequence much of his humorous drawing had a strange surface seriousness, which assisted the legend below it much as an unnatural solemnity of expression helps the comedian on the stage.

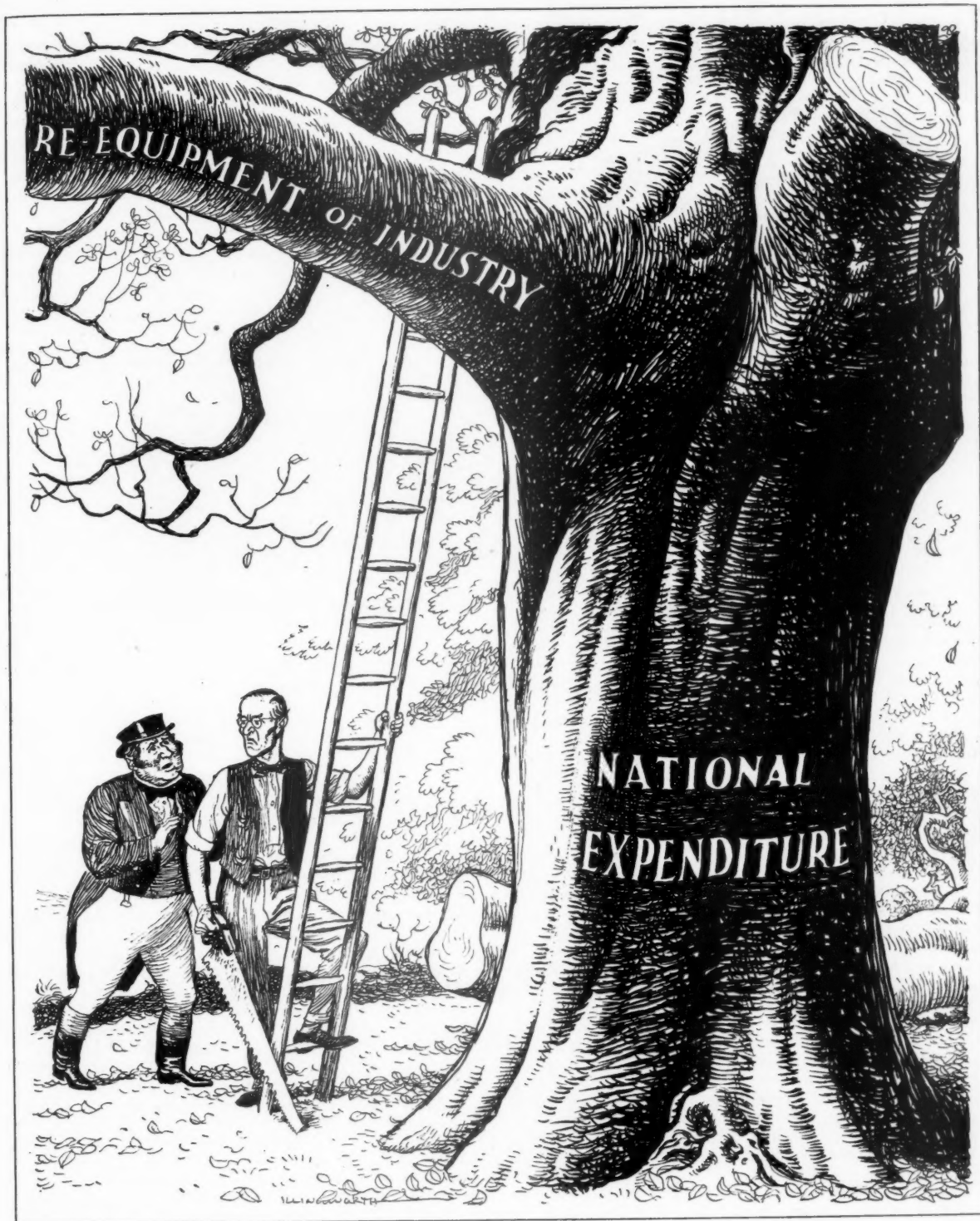
Although his technique could not be said to derive directly from that of any artist working in the same field, it was fairly closely related to that of Phil May: it is true that he wielded a sabre of charcoal where Phil May used a more rapier-like pen, but all the same they had many artistic ancestors in common, from the elder Breughel down to Hogarth.

George Belcher contributed over one thousand drawings to *Punch*, the first appearing in 1906, when he was 30 years old, and the last in May, 1941. During the whole of the intervening period his style hardly varied—always

there was the same careful portraiture (so that one could instantly recognize a favourite model at every appearance) and always the same sureness of touch in guiding a seemingly clumsy piece of charcoal round all the subtleties of an outline.

He was elected A.R.A. in 1931, and R.A. in 1945, and his work has an assured place in the great tradition of British draughtsmanship. His example of accuracy in observation combined with skill in recording is one which every pictorial humorist would do well to follow.

George Belcher not only drew "characters"; consciously or unconsciously he was one himself. His rather archaic style of dress, the dignified kindness of his manner, the grave delight with which in the old days he would summon a friend to his side at the Savage Club or at the Café Royal, made an immediate and unforgettable impression on those who met him. His death, which occurred on October 3rd, in his seventy-third year, was a sad blow to his many friends and the countless others who knew and admired his work.



"WOODMAN, SPARE THAT BOUGH!"



"Well, there's no harm in trying, dear—they MAY buy it back."

My Daily

"I GOT you a daily," said my ancient odd-job man last April, grinning with self-approval, as he drifted in at the gate one evening.

It seemed unlikely, coming from such an unexpected quarter, but yes, dear reader, just for a moment I thought the same as you, and hope gave a weak flutter; because my Mrs. Puffin's legs had gone the week before, accompanied, as was only reasonable, by Mrs. Puffin. Then I saw that I had simply mistranslated George.

He advanced slowly, extending one grimy palm, on which lay something that looked like a potato with a lot on its mind.

"A daily, like I said," he repeated. "No trouble to raise. Grows theirsels, they do. Needn't do a thing."

If that were true it sounded like my sort of plant.

"Really no trouble?" I said. "I haven't much time, George, now that Mrs. Puffin—"

"No trouble," said George again. "Don't have to do a thing."

"Let's plant it now," I said.

"Where would be a good place?"

George inspected the bed by the doorstep, occupied at the time by about two million daffodil leaves, several blackened clumps of last year's Michaelmas daisies, and one small cricket-bat.

"If you put 'e along o' they," said George tactfully, pointing at the daisies, "they'd look a treat together, wouldn't 'em?"

I agreed and fetched a spade.

"I just dig a hole and put it in?"

"We—ell, no, don't plant 'un for a week or so," he said. "Lay 'un on graound, an' sprinkle 'un every evenin' to swell 'un—so 'e'll grow quicker when pla-a-anted—it's no trouble."

I put the spade down and fetched the watering-can.

"Then in a week I just dig a hole and put it in?"

"We—ell, no," said George. "Should put a bit o' somethin' in the graound first."

I put the can down and straightened up. "What sort of something?"

George turned round and gazed for a long time at the view. Far away a clump of beeches hung over a chalk dell.

"Beech-ma-a-ast," he said, waving an immense arm at the middle distance. "That's where I gets all mine. Fill a sack there with 'un and dig 'un in good and deep—that's all 'e'll want."

"Sprinkle for a week, dig in beech-ma-a-ast," I murmured. "That all?"

"That's about it," he added, moving off to the tool-shed. If I had a faint hope that he would come out with an empty sack it vanished when he reappeared with my new scythe on his shoulder.

"Can't stop longer, mum; can I borrow your scythe for one evenin'? Got to do long grass at the big 'ouse to-night, and their blade's no use."

"All right," I said feebly, though proud to have a better blade than the

big 'ouse. I wondered if I would still have cause for pride by the time my own hay wanted cutting. "And about the dahlia—nothing to do when it's planted?"

"Nothin'," said George from the gate. "'Cep' of course they slugs'll do for 'e unless you take care of 'un just when first leaves show."

"Slugs," I said. "What do I do?"

"Sut," he answered. "No trouble."

I went and fetched a notebook and sat down on the roller.

"After that you're all right," he said, beginning to straggle into the garden again. "Nothin' but watch 'e grow. Stake 'un up firm, of course, about fourth leaf."

"Fourth leaf," I repeated, scribbling madly.

"And tie again at about so high," said George, holding his hand quite near the ground. "Wind'll flatten 'un, else—an' there's terrible winds up 'ere."

"I suppose there's a special way of tying it up," I said, thinking for a moment that I was being very funny.

"We—ell now, fancy you know that," he said, laughing wheezily; and while I was wondering how to take it he went on: "Who'd 've thought it?" He laid the scythe down tenderly, dragged a piece of string out of the depths of two waistcoats and looked round vaguely for a stand-in for the dahlia. I dropped the notebook and held up a forefinger. "Dahlia," I said.

He slipped the string round my finger and looked round again. I held up the pencil. "Stake," I said. He crossed the string to make a figure-of-eight, and tied it round the pencil.

"That's the proper way," George said. "Now 'e'll give to wind, but 'e won't flatten."

We stopped playing cat's-cradle, and I picked up my notes again.

"Anything else?" I asked, although I had already given up my plans for visiting friends this summer.

"Earwiggies," said George, picking up the scythe. "Put a liddle flower-pot over the stake."

"Oh! is that what they're for?" I exclaimed. "I always wondered. You just leave them there, getting fuller and fuller of earwigs?"

"Bless you, no," shouted George, swinging round slowly as he reached the gate. "Look at 'em every mornin' and shake 'em into a bucket of salt water—else they blasted earwiggies'll eat all the buds. It don't take a minute of your time."

"And if—I mean when—it flowers," I said bravely, "how long will it go on for?"

"Depends," he answered cautiously.

"Might be a month—could be longer—but first frost'll finish 'e anyways."

"And then I suppose it sits in the ground all winter, and shows up in the spring again." After all, the late autumn might be quite a nice time for a holiday.

A look as near strong emotion as I have ever seen on it spread over the large expanse of George's face. He moved quite fast in my direction.

"Sit in the graound—sit in the graound," he moaned. "Lose 'un for sure, that way. No, dig 'e up so soon as leaves blacken—leave 'un in, frost'll get 'un, if wet don't."

"Dig it up," I murmured humbly, starting a new page. "And then what?"

"We—ell, now, here's where you do need to take a bit o' care," he said, with no intention of amusing me, "when you lift 'un. Lift 'un on a bright day, and lay upsydowny for to drain an' dry—the stalk'll rot back into root, else."

"But I can't leave it upsydowny all winter," I said, nearly crying, "after all it's gone through—"

"Bless you no, mum," he said soothingly. "Twenty-four hours in bright weather'll do it."

"You can't have twenty-four hours of bright weather," I said, getting silly again. "I suppose you'll say next there must be a ring round the moon or something."

George stared at me solemnly.

"Never did hear o' that," he said.

"Old wives' tale, I should say. No, when 'e's proper dry, lay 'un in a box near your fire somewheres—that'll keep 'un snug till spring—I stacks mine in one liddle cupboard nex' my kitchen stove."

"And how do you know when it's time to plant them again?"

George chuckled. "Cupboard door busts open—and there's the dailies ashovin' each other out. They're no trouble to grow, mum. Good night."

* * * * *

Well, I wrote letters resigning from everything in the village, and gave myself up to my daily. It flourished. It flowered for weeks and weeks, and the village hung its chin over the gate and admired its soup-plate blooms. And when I dug it up I found that it had turned into my dailies, for lots of little strangers were clinging on in all directions. I dried 'un and drained 'un and put 'un in wooden chest by the fire.

But it has taken it out of me. I never got away of course. But who would grudge the loving care of their little ones? And I am really getting my strength back quite quickly as I sit by the autumn fire.

I really needn't worry for months yet about that box-lid—but I can't help keeping an anxious eye on it. Sometimes, when the firelight flickers, it startles me by seeming to heave a little. Oh! I do hope it won't start opening just yet.



"Put them on at the start of Workers' Playtime and simmer gently until the end of the News."

At the Pictures

A Man About the House—Les Portes de la Nuit—Ivy

FOR a film from a novel, *A Man About the House* (Director: LESLIE ARLISS) has an unexpectedly small number of characters and is unexpectedly concentrated in theme. To

married him, he is seen to be systematically poisoning her so as to inherit the place. There is a quick, well-worked-up though rather conventionally violent climax (the sensationalism of the fight on the cliff, and the obviousness of the back-projection photography in this scene, are weak spots). The newcomer KIERON MOORE is impressively convincing as the vital, charming, murderous Italian, MARGARET JOHNSTON and DULCIE GRAY are excellently balanced as the near-victim and her younger sister, and FELIX AYLMER (of course) stands out among the small-part players.

A very long, full—indeed almost congested—film of Paris towards the end of the war, *Les Portes de la Nuit* (Director: MARCEL CARNÉ) might easily be the adaptation of a novel, instead of from a scenario by JACQUES PRÉVERT. One is expected perhaps to compare it with the

with first-rate performances, admirably handled sequences and effects that are a pleasure to the eye. Wonderfully pleasing things can be done with strong black shadows in wet city streets at night. The tale covers only a few hours and the personages are Resistance people, defiant or uneasy collaborators and the ordinary harassed population of the city: we see them in and outside the Métro, in a black-market café, on the stairs of a crowded building and—this is a mysterious, imaginatively-treated scene—in a junkyard, among old statues. SATURNIN FABRE, the best-known to us of all the players, has the richest part and revels in it, but everyone is good.

From the long list of names from the Hollywood English colony in the cast list of *Ivy* (Director: SAM WOOD) it is immediately evident that we are in for a picture of English life; in fact this is one of Mrs. BELLOC LOWNDES's stories of Wicked Ladies, poison and Edwardian fashions and all. It has a certain appeal, even if you aren't a fancier of the Hollywood England, in which the faces of a street crowd in about 1911 look as if they were all straight out of *Oliver Twist* and a young man with a face and manner somehow characteristically American, dressed as if for Ascot, enthusiastically talks about a theowsan peowns; in which JOAN FONTAINE gives the impression of taking a deep breath before approaching the difficult hurdle of the broad *a* in *can't*, and "one guinea" is paid immediately on demand, just like that, presumably in a single coin. One doesn't take the film seriously, but it attains quite a pitch of suspense, and it has several even startling moments.

R. M.



[A Man About the House]

MAJOR-DOMO TAKES OVER.

Salvatore KIERON MOORE
Agnes MARGARET JOHNSTON

be sure there was an intervening stage: the immediate adaptation is from the dramatized version, seen in London last year. Thinking of these tortuous preliminaries, one approaches the film with distrust, but it proves to be good and enjoyable. It is a period story (1907); after a short introduction in an English industrial town the scene shifts to Italy, where in due course there is a radical change of mood and a situation of some drama and terror develops. This swift, but not jerkily abrupt, change of mood is one of the most interesting things about the picture and is very well handled. At first it appears that the point of the narrative is the slightly ludicrous sight of a prim English spinster's falling for the overpoweringly masculine major-domo of her villa in Italy, and the cinema is full of light-hearted giggles; but these die away soon enough when, once she has

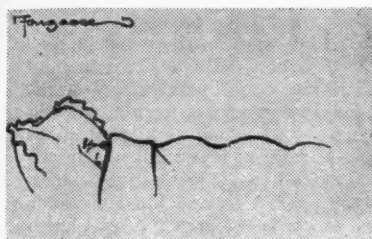
earlier CARNÉ - PRÉVERT picture of Paris a century ago, *Les Enfants du Paradis*, but that was an altogether more light-hearted and obvious affair—more obvious, that is, if one wished to take it obviously. This story is heavy with destiny: Destiny announces himself in person (in the character of a tramp), and some of the scenes become almost too heavy with his influence. I wouldn't go so far as to say that I understood the point of the story or even precisely what the title signifies; I found the picture baffling, but I enjoyed it. Baffling or not, it is certainly crammed



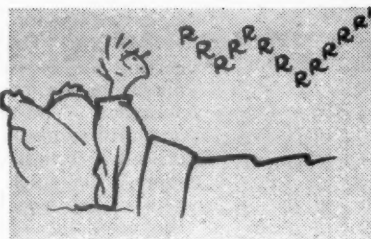
[Ivy]

A SPOT OF YACHTING

Ivy JOAN FONTAINE
Miles Rushworth HERBERT MARSHALL



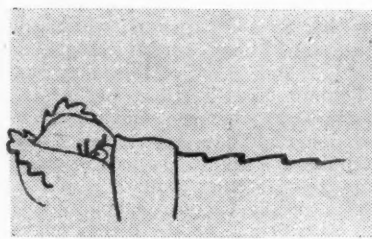
Practically every night, like a million others, tired out with the day's labours, I go thankfully to sleep.



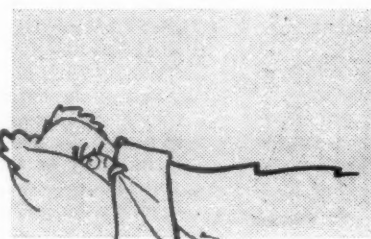
Practically every night, like a million others, I am awakened in the silent watches by sudden aircraft roaring through the sky across Central London.



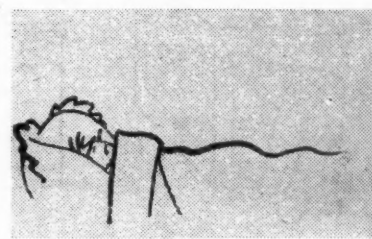
Practically every night, like a million others, I vow that first thing in the morning I will write to the papers about this monstrous and callous disregard for the comfort and well-being of others.



Practically every night, like a million others, I lie awake thinking up phrases like "We are perhaps fortunate that no main line railway company has yet insisted on running its trains straight across Piccadilly Circus or through St. George's Hospital, on the grounds that this is the shortest route from the northern termini—



to the Channel ports," and "As well might it be argued that fleets of tanks should be directed through the City during rush-hours, in order that their drivers may gain experience in traffic." Practically every night, however, like a million others, I eventually realize that a responsible authority insensitive enough to allow—



such things to happen in the first place can hardly be sensitive enough to be influenced by letters to the Press.

And so, finally, practically every night, like a million others, I go sadly to sleep again.

From the Chinese

Sixpence

MY friend,
Look not so darkly at me,
As men look at the robber
Who darts from the forest
To despoil them.
Nay, if you can,
Dig from your bosom
A kindly word or two,
If not a word of thankfulness:
Even a happy reference
To the weather
Would be something.
The legal fare is a shilling
(Indeed, till that last fatal yard,
It was ninepence),
And I have given you
From my hard-earned store
One shilling and sixpence—
One half more
Than the appointed sum.
Few, and happy, are the men
So well rewarded.

Imagine the astonishment
Of a railway company
Which, having charged ten
shillings,
Was offered fifteen,
Or the post-office lady
If, purchasing a twopenny stamp,
I insisted on thrusting
Threepence
Into her hand!
My friend,
I understand
Your point of view,
And your misfortunes:
You have, no doubt,
A sick wife,
And voracious children.
The cost of living
Has mounted,
But your rates
(Like His Majesty's Judges')
Remain the same.

And next time,
If you promise to smile,
And perhaps say "Thanks"
(A very short word)
I may give you ninepence.
But you, in turn,
Must try to see
My own position.
The sixpence I have given you
From the goodness of my heart
Is all yours,
And will suffer no income tax.
That is not so with me:
To give you sixpence
I must earn about a *shilling*!
In fact, this ride
Has cost me a damn sight more
Than you realize
(To wit, three bob):
And next time—
Who knows?—
I may take a bus.

A. P. H.



"This Forces ent business—how many chaps have you on your strength here?"

Dialogue

DIALOGUE is a notable feature of life and of books. If it is perhaps an even more notable feature of books, that would be because of the inverted commas which distinguish it from the surrounding scenery, thoughts and other necessary adjuncts. I admit that in life you can distinguish dialogue from scenery even more easily, but it does not always get thought of as dialogue—more often as several people talking at once, or as what you hear in between speaking. When only one person is talking and the others listening the result is known as a monologue, which in its extreme form consists of someone being humorous on a platform before a swinging curtain. It is as rare but as well-known a branch of human activity as putting the wrong letter in the right envelope. In ordinary life people do not go in for monologues; they do not expect to get through more than twenty words without being answered or not answered, and plan accordingly.

The dialogue of ordinary life may be divided into the following categories: questions, answers, cries of good cheer, annoyance or amazement, statements, bright remarks no one hears, assessments of weather and nagging. The last is a large category ranging from asking whether someone has written that novel yet to a slight ostentation in replacing the honey-jar on its insulating saucer. Weather dialogue is, on the other hand, remarkably limited in scope. No one has ever tried to find a synonym for a nip in the air; and those of my readers who think themselves too clever to go round saying that the days are drawing in are usually the first to say it, in a special voice which indicates that they do not want anyone to think they mean it. They

start, with some scientific misgivings, on about June the twenty-fifth. Ordinary people wait until it seems to be getting darker earlier. Weather dialogue in general is noted for its uncontroversial tone, particularly among strangers. You never get two strangers arguing whether it has turned chilly. Let one so much as hint at it, the other falls into line eagerly. Sociologists think this is why there is as much weather talk as there is traditionally supposed to be. It is the nearest to undefined bonhomie that anything so definite as words can arrive at, and indeed is not so much words as an extension of a nice smile.

QUESTIONS are easily recognized in spoken dialogue by the way they end half-way up the voice, or even more infallibly—for many a voice goes up where another voice would go down—by starting with a verb, but in practice the recognizing process is simpler. People asked if they remembered Mrs. Smith are not worrying whether there was a verb back at the beginning. They are worrying about having forgotten Mrs. Smith. Answers, which are what people say to questions, may consist simply of "Yes," "Well, not actually," and so on, or they may run into a whole sentence of opinion like "Terrible" or "Aren't they?" Sometimes, of course, as when someone asks what someone else has been doing all day, an answer could legitimately be three thousand words of the sort of thing you find embedded among the sterner stuff of highbrow weeklies; but, as I implied, people are not built nowadays for speaking at a length other people wonder if they ought to stop eating for. As for those bright remarks no one hears, the point about them is that they are so awfully bright; and the fact that no one hears them, by which I mean no one is knocked sideways by their brilliance, makes the people who said them wonder if they did. They may, however, be taken back and used again.

The cheery or angry noises I mentioned bring me to the "pshaw" situation. According to statistics, there is no time from eight in the morning to eleven at night when someone somewhere is not telling someone else that no one has ever heard anyone say "pshaw." Conversely, no one has ever read the exact sound people make when they are surprised enough to click their tongues up behind their front teeth. You see some brave juggling with "t's" and "s's," but the nub of such a sound, the fact that it happens backwards, or from the outer world towards the throat, cannot be dealt with in standard print.

One of the most disconcerting forms of spoken dialogue is also one of the shortest. It consists of a person summoning another person with an all-out yell and finding that this other person is not at the top of the house but just behind the door. For some subtle reason—perhaps to reduce the decibel average of the conversation—this other person always answers in a quiet, controlled voice which implies that there is no need to shout at people three feet off. An even more unsuccessful dialogue is the kind that takes place against running bath-water. People working from the other side of a shut door in competition with the down-rush and uprush of taps and pipes are not at their best. Whatever they say they will have to say again, which is why they prefer to bang. But perhaps the most unsuccessful of all is the dialogue that takes place between one person reading and one person not. It is at such times that the person who is not reading realizes that the person who is has got caught up in the print to the incomprehensible extent of not wanting to come out of it and be human. A feature of this dialogue is the pauses before, or instead of, the answers from the person reading.

Turning now from spoken to written dialogue, I must say something about a difficulty sometimes experienced



"We bought him from the Arsenal for seven thousand five hundred pounds."

by keen dialogue-followers. This difficulty crops up when a novelist has only two people talking and decides not to bother with tagging the names of the speakers on to what they are speaking but just to bung down what they say and leave it to the reader to work out who is saying what. In theory this should be easy to follow; one person says the first bit, another says the second, the person who said the first bit says the third bit, and so on down to where the dialogue packs up and the next line reveals that the last speaker has just asked himself to get up and open the window. There is then nothing for the novel-reader but to go back and work the whole dialogue out again, raising or lowering the mental voice to the estimated pitch of each speaker and remembering that what each speaker says is a clue to the identity of the speaker when once you know who is speaking. Some novelists do take much care to record that each line of dialogue was said, interposed, or ejaculated by whoever said it; they run the risk of being read aloud now and then in the wrong spirit, but are certainly trying to help.

Another difficulty occurs when a speaker starts a new paragraph. A new paragraph denotes a pause for breath, and the reader, who has only real life to go on, takes it that the next speaker has butted in. (The fact that the first paragraph will have no inverted commas at the end of it will not help the sort of reader I am referring to, because I am referring to the sort of reader who will not have noticed this.) The result may easily be the next half-page worked through with the high voice speaking the low voice bits and someone, if not asking himself to open the window, at least turning out to be his own aunt. Psychologists say that if people in a novel called other people by their names

as often as people do in real life it wouldn't make things much better, because in real life (this just shows that you never know where you are with real life) people don't call each other by their names oftener than in novels. Also (say psychologists) if novelists were to stick to real life they would, every now and then, have to make one of their characters call another character by the not very similar name of a third character in the room; not to mention having to hold the story up for ten minutes while four people decide whether it was Wednesday or Thursday they saw a piece in the paper that they would have liked a fifth person to see, if they had kept the paper. All this is not what the public would expect of a novel; especially a novel nowadays, for which it has paid nine-and-sixpence by borrowing it from someone who wants it back to return to the library.

Stratford Insomnia

SLEEP that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,
Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee?
Be not self-willed, for thou art much too fair.
(Let gentleness my strong enforcement be.)

Here feel we but the penalty of Adam
That suck'd the honey of his music vows;
Give me to drink mandragora. Why, madam?
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse.

O, I have passed a miserable night,
So long as youth and thou are of one date.
When dying clouds contend with growing light
I all alone beweepe my outcast state,

Chanting faint hymns to the cold, fruitless moon.
The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon.

J. B. N.



"Can we have our battering ram back, please?"



"I think of her night and day—I just can't do anything except paint her over and over again."

Our Holiday

WHEN people ask me, as they frequently do, where we spent our holiday this year, the answer is: "The Amusements Hall on the pier." We should have done this, I think, in any case, even if it hadn't rained. As it was, it *did* rain, and we spent a happy holiday at the Amusements Hall from midday until our coach left again at six.

We started our holiday off with a bang with a stirring game of football between two well-matched teams. The players were perhaps rather heavily clad for such hot weather—they wore voluminous woollen jerseys and knickers, more suited to a night on the bridge on a Russian convoy than to a football-match in August—but they played with magnificent spirit and startling unison. The whole team kicked as one man. The first goal came

straight from the kick-off, owing to my wife's twiddling the thing that pops the ball out of the ground in the middle, instead of the thing that controls the kicking. After that break-away we got the hang of things, and by cautious tactics managed to make the next twopence last six minutes before my right-back, hard pressed, heeled the ball for the goalkeeper to clear, and the goalkeeper failed to gather. With the score at one penny each, both sides then went all-out for full points, and ding-dong play ensued. The winning goal came with the last kick of the match, the final score of two pennies to one in my favour being a very fair reflection of the game.

Passing on to cricket, which was being played on a neighbouring pitch—one is apt to get these sports mix-ups in August—my wife did better.

Winning the toss, she sent me in to bat on a bumpy wicket, and soon had me scratching for runs. I was dismissed cheaply, although I continually no-balled her shock-bowler. Not only did he bowl under-arm daisy-cutters—not in itself, as far as I know, an offence—but his action, which consisted of teeing the ball up in front of him and striking it with his fist, was the most extraordinary I have ever seen.

At the automatic punching-ball it took seven goes for me to work my punch up to half-past on the dial, by which time I was so exhausted that I think it is fair to say the punching-ball won. My wife thought half-past was pretty good, and I hurried her away before she could watch the next performer.

We rested awhile at the puppet-drama. "Is Marriage a Failure?" a play in three acts, proved a soundly-constructed, thought-provoking drama; the final curtain, when we see the once-happy husband, cowed by a symbolic rolling-pin, wearily doing the washing-up in the scullery, was especially effective. "Midnight in the Haunted Churchyard" was a little Grand Guignol piece depending for its horrors on the appearance of two skeletons and one ghost from various tombs. "The Fire," melodrama in the old tradition, impressed us by the breathless pace of the action—the fire starting, the engines rushing from the station, the gallant rescue being achieved, and the conflagration subdued in just thirty seconds from the time of inserting the initial penny.

We then moved on to more modern art—the dissolving views. I went to see "Artists' Models at Play," "Paris After Dark," and "Behind the Curtains." My wife chose "Through the Keyhole," "In an Actress's Dressing-Room," and "Secrets of Marriage." We both cheated a bit by holding on to any picture that seemed promising, and calling the other across to have a look. Actually, all we *did* see was a great deal of underclothing closely resembling our footballers' sports-wear.

Continuing in the dashing vein, I had a pennyworth of Grip-Tease. This is probably the cheapest thing on the pier, because although it costs a penny it provides merry entertainment for at least fifty deadheads. The penny being mine, mine was the grip that unleashed the series of pictures of a lady in successive stages of undress. I believe there used to be a popular musical-hall act in which a very fat man removed suit after suit of clothing, finally revealing himself as a slim and personable young man in tights. The lady starring in Grip-Tease was, I

should say, one of the family. I cannot speak for the ultimate tights. My grip faltered after about the eleventh petticoat, and even swift support from a heavy-breathing young man just behind me did no more than damage knuckles already much bruised by my contest with the punching-ball. There was general disappointment at my lack of stamina, and I left blushing furiously—not at the exhibition, but at the loudly-voiced suggestion that growing agitation was the cause of my failure.

The next fifteen minutes went on Skee-ball, of which the most enjoyable part is inserting the penny and pulling the handle for the nine balls to roll down to your hand. The maximum score is 450, but you are generously allowed a prize if you notch a mere 350. Our best effort was some 200 short of that. The target area was so well netted in that it was very much like a batsman trying to hit thirty-six off one over at the nets.

We then knocked off for a late lunch. Our sandwiches we had eaten somewhere about Dorking, so we now went to the well-appointed buffet at one end of the hall and did full justice to an epicurean meal of ice-cream, toffee-apples, and candyfloss. Candyfloss, which is a bale of pink, sweet stuff like cottonwool on the end of a stick, is about the size of the brush in the "Not too much" picture in the shaving-soap advertisement, and, injudiciously applied, is capable of enveloping the entire face up to the ears.

Much refreshed, we returned to pleasure-seeking. At the pin-tables our highest score was 48,100, but 48,100 what, I have not the least idea. However, the act of scoring in such splendiferous style does give one a feeling of specious grandeur. 48,100, incidentally, was just 1,900 short of what we required for a prize. The prize would have consisted of our penny back. This seems to me dangerously like inflation.

We then had two-shillingworth of darts—twelve darts in all. The darts themselves were peculiar. Constructed on boomerang principles, they looped-the-loop with ease. You did not aim them; you simply dispatched them. If you pause to think—only, of course, you don't—twopence a dart is coming fairly high. Usually I get about forty darts for sixpence, the price of a mild-and-bitter. Occasionally, I have even been the one to get the mild-and-bitter. A hasty glance at the shelf of swag showed that the prizes here were less attractive.

We were now concentrating less on sheer, mad pleasure and more on the

winning of a trophy to take home. Cats yielded nothing. You potted at their silhouettes with airguns carrying a deadly charge of corks, and the first two cats went over easily enough, but the third and vital cat was made of sterner stuff and simply kicked the cork back at you. Throwing wooden balls at piles of clubs and woollen balls at piles of tins was equally humiliating. It wasn't until we took to horse-racing that we struck lucky.

There were eighteen players at this. You sat on stools, as at a soda-fountain, and rolled a wooden ball into holes in front of you. According to the number on the hole, your horse moved on one, two, or three places before the

ball tumbled back to you. You followed the progress of your horse in an illuminated frame that seemed to be a complicated cross of a totalisator and the train-indicator at Waterloo. It was entirely fascinating, and we spent the rest of our holiday at it. When we finally dashed for our coach we took with us a small aluminium saucepan and a rag doll. I forget what their cost amounted to. I forget what they looked like too. We accidentally left them in a pub on the road back.

The air was very bracing in the pier Amusements Hall, and we had both got quite brown sunbathing in our own garden the previous Sunday. Next year we mean to go to the other pier.



"If you see anything that looks edible, get it."



"It keeps on sinking to the bottom of the sky."

Psongs for Psychiatrists

Bewildered Beryl or The Case of the Inhibited Ingénue

I WISH there were some way of knowing—
Well, how to live Life in the Raw.
I wish I knew where I was going;
I wish I knew what I was for;
I wish I thought vodka delicious;
I wish I knew whisky from gin;
I wish I knew how to be vicious!
I wish I knew how to begin.

Yes, I know I'm a mass of Repressions.
I know they affect my Technique.
I've more Inhibitions than fifty physicians
Could operate on in a week.
I wish I'd achieved self-expression,
And lived with a sculptor in sin.
I'm sure we'd be friendly enough in the end,
If I knew at *which* end to begin.

What I long for's a life of Adventure
Of the sort that they have on the Screen—
Real cinema stuff, getting smooth with a tough
To get dope on some secret machine.

But I've never been much of a linguist.
It's a pity, I think, in a way.
You can't worm their views out of Japs or Hindoos
If you can't understand what they say.

I wish I were cultured like Constance,
Or understood Art like Annette.
I wish I were Lola, and played the viola
In Benjamin Britten's quartet.
But I don't know a Mass from a Motet;
I don't know a Lied from a Song.
I daren't say "Oboe" to a Goossens: I know
I'd be told, if I did, I was wrong.

I wish I were clever like Chloe;
I wish I were pretty like Prue;
I wish I were Charlotte, and looked—well, more scarlet,
And less like—oh, less like I do.
I'd give all I've got to know how, when—or what;
But I know I shall die, in the end,
Rejected by Life—a philatelist's wife,
Or just a psychiatrist's friend.

P. B.



THE NEW FROG-MAN

For Spongers Only

FOXEARH,
BARSETSHIRE.
20th September 1947

The Manager,
Hotel Stupendous,
Babel-on-Sea.

DEAR SIR,—I regret to trouble you about what might in other days have seemed a trivial matter—a bath-sponge. Would you be kind enough to make inquiries amongst your staff as to whether a large specimen was found in one of the bathrooms after my departure. I shall gladly reimburse you for the expense of forwarding it to me, and also reward the finder.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES CANTRIP.

FOXEARH,
BARSETSHIRE.
20th September 1947

The Manageress,
Wavecrest,
Blacksands.

DEAR MADAM,—You will no doubt recall my recent week-end residence under your roof. On my return home I found myself minus a bath-sponge. Should one be found either in my bedroom or the bathroom or the passage between, will you be kind enough to send it on at your early convenience. I shall of course pay the cost of registration.

Thanking you in anticipation,
JAMES CANTRIP.

FOXEARH,
BARSETSHIRE.
20th September 1947

The Manager,
The Outstretched Hand Hotel,
Little Eating.

SIR,—I seem to have reached home after my stay at "The Outstretched Hand" without a valuable bath-sponge and shall esteem it a favour if you will institute inquiries as to whether such a thing was found after my departure. Any expense in the way of postage and insurance, and perhaps a reasonable reward to the finder, I shall of course be delighted to refund to you.

Yours anxiously,
JAMES CANTRIP.

HOTEL STUPENDOUS,
BABEL-ON-SEA.
25th September 1947

Jas. Cantripe, Esq.

SIR,—In reply to yours of 20th inst., I regret to inform you that your sponge does not appear to have been left on these premises.

Yours truly,
SQUIGGLE,
for Manager.

WAVECREST,
BLACKSANDS.
25th September 1947

Mr. James Guntrub.

DEAR MR. GUNTRUB,—In spite of careful search and inquiry your missing

sponge cannot be found at "Wavecrest." I sympathise with you in your sad bereavement!

Yours sincerely,
JULIA WHOO.

THE OUTSTRETCHED HAND HOTEL,
LITTLE EATING.
28th September 1947

James Canteloupe, Esq.

SIR,—In reply to yours of 20th inst., I have much pleasure in sending on the missing sponge. It was found in one of the bathrooms the day after your departure. I may say that I consider you very fortunate that nobody else removed it, the times being what they are. Kindly acknowledge receipt of same and oblige,

Yours faithfully,
HIEROGLYPH,
for Manager.

THE HIDEOUT,
LONDON, W.C.

William Smart, Esq.

MY DEAR BILL,—I enclose copies of some correspondence that may amuse you and give you an idea worth trying. I had rather hoped I might get two, out of three shots, but the one from the Outstretched Hand is well worth having. My own is nearly torn to shreds.

Your old playmate,
JIMMY CANTRIP.
W. K. H.

Arrangements are in Train.

THE railway company has kindly said it will do all it can to help me. I take this to mean that so long as the Deputy Director-General of Safety-Pin Production (Brass) is not moving north to-night to harry the industrialists I shall get a sleeper. There are few things in life I like better than cleaving the darkness at seventy miles an hour in a well-found bunk...

"We're frightfully sorry," says the girl at the station, speaking presumably on behalf of the stricken directors, "but all we can give you is a first-class sleeper with another gentleman."

"What kind of a gentleman?" I ask, sharply.

"A Mr. Smith."

"But which model of Mr. Smith?"

"Reelly, we couldn't say," exclaims the girl, who has liquid brown eyes the colour of malt-and-cod-liver-oil and

who is shutting me up for the night with a totally strange man without even being able to tell me if he is the sort to hang his wig over the ventilator...

Walking to the platform I marvel at this extraordinary foolhardiness on the part of the railways in mewing up in a small box for ten hours, without any security interrogation, whatever Mr. Smiths may come along. Why, on a busy night Mr. Attlee and Mr. Churchill, travelling incog. in those Office of Works beards one reads about behind which political leaders are said to be feeling the pulse of the electorate, might easily find themselves together...

"10a," says the attendant, taking my ticket. "10b has just gone in."

I pause at the door of the compartment, wishing I were one of the men who dislocate strangers' shoulder-

blades with one hand while producing a bottle of Scotch with the other, who instantly set a jovial and easy note with a stop-press item from Throgmorton Street. Alas, I am of different stuff. I am a more delicately petalled flower.

"Good evening," grunts 10b.

Where before have I seen those narrow, glistening eyes, that corrugated nose, those smooth well-padded cheeks? In a flash I recall the triumphant bigamist of last Sunday's papers. Doubtless he has been granted compassionate bail to adjust his long-term policy in Scotland.

"Good evening," I reply coldly.

"Close to-night."

"Very close indeed," I agree.

10b and I, prime fruits of generations of Englishmen whose hearts have turned to water at the prospect of speech with the unknown, now stand



"I suppose you know nightingales' tongues count as a separate course?"

facing one another across a few feet of jaded carpet, fingering our hats damply. If the railway companies are obliged by the squalor of the times to turn first-class sleepers into distressed areas then the least they could do would be to have a retired diplomat in a top-hat on the train, who would say: "I want you to meet Mr. Smith, he is fifty-three and a vegetarian and lives with his wife and five daughters in a double-fronted villa not far from Watford on the profits of a special sort of washer which withstands treacle. His spare time is divided between breeding Mendelian snapdragons and writing hymns. He is not interested in archery, foreign affairs or art."

That would have taken some of the starch out of the situation now confronting 10b and me.

"Better turn in," he mutters, abruptly, suddenly whisking off his jacket as if it were on fire.

"Much better," I also mutter, whisking mine off and enmeshing my cuff-buttons in the rack.

"Care to brush your teeth first?" he asks, edging away from the basin, in which he has been tentatively sitting.

"After you, sir." We are neither of us undersized and I can see it is out of the question for me to get past him

unless we both back out into the corridor and use it as a marshalling-yard.

"Please!"

"Really!"

"As a matter of fact," admits 10b uncomfortably, "I don't always brush them when I travel."

"Nor do I," I confess, and for a second we both giggle like rival hockey-captains. Much might have come out of that giggle, but in fact, like the winter sun, it only makes the following ice more deadly.

"I beg your pardon," I cry, for in climbing out of my shirt I have given him no mean left hook to the ear. My apologies, filtered through utility flannel, sound uninspired.

"Going to undress in my bunk," he says defiantly.

I do the same. It is a long, tortuous and bruising process. I am the underdog and when I am finished there is a bump like an egg on the top of my head. I stagger out to hang up my clothes, and down from his eyrie comes 10b, putting his flabby foot squarely in my face. Are purple pyjamas, I ask myself, a regular cog in the bigamy machine? When we have hung up our clothes the train lurches drunkenly at its first glimpse of Hitchin and they all fall to

the floor in a single panchromatic heap...

At length we are back in our bunks. I find myself in a fever of misgiving. Society seems never to have laid down set forms for breaking off verbal futilities with a stranger suspended in purple pyjamas just above one's head. Would "good night," spoken not warmly but without actual malice, be going too far? Might not even the coolest reference to the dollar drain risk an imbecile conversation dragging on perhaps into the small hours?

"Good night," growls 10b, switching the light to DIM.

"Good night," I hasten to say.

The worst is over.

There is a tap at the door, and the attendant puts in his sleek head.

"Sorry I couldn't let you gentlemen know sooner," he says, "but if either of you would like a sleeper to yourself there's an empty in the next coach."

ERIC.

Gnalskcab?

YLFRETTUB, enord, and lee,
Haunt my brain and madden me:
May the man be thrice accursed
Who told me spiv was VIPs reversed.

H. J.'s Belles-Lettres

THIS Belle-Lettre is yet another widening of my literary experience. All whom I have consulted agree that the next stage in my pilgrimage to Parnassus is the Love Yarn, though this I find unexpectedly difficult, as my wife discourages my researches abroad, and at home purple passion would not suit well with my constant attempts to make myself a ratepayer and a gentleman. However, by a study of the writings of other workers in this field and the use of that sixth sense by which the artist supplies the deficiencies of his own experience, I have wrought a short story which, in the opinion of B. Smith, fairly sizzles. I am at a loss to account for the style, but am grateful for it.

In an old-world garden, amid the creak of deck-chairs, the scent of thyme and the taste of the most tentative China tea, came first the Love God to Mr. Ardingthway. The cause of his vanquishing? Miss Jones, none to her equal or appropinquitive. Her tresses were like gold in colour, silk in texture; her eyes were blue, more especially the left. Italian, music and simple cookery did she know. She was indeed a prize ripe for the winning; yet so far no aspirant to her hand had gained more than a flick dismissive from her dimpled fingers. Rather than preen herself among the homage of males, would she to the old women of the locality good books distinctly and firmly read, or over the paternal tea-table alfresco queen it. (Her mother, before our tale opens, had to Falmouth with a fiddler flightily flown.)

Not only the youth but also the maiden knew for the first time the pangs of love. Miss Jones faltered, proffering second cups to those not yet provided with a first. Over her neck, betwixt her golden ringlets, carmine spread the blushes like the red sun-rise. From her ruby lips a girl's first giggle echoed in the trim shade, fell upon the lawn. Lighter than the leaf-fall that echoes in the autumn, fleetier than the leaf-fall before the autumn breaks.

Quite other was the effect of Cupid's toxophily on Mr. Ardingthway. The stricken male knotted the veins of his head till he looked gnarled as an ancient oak, and clutched the slim sandwich till it ran caviar as, in olden times, conduits ran wine. His jaw (the ladies like it so) set like a vice. These signs did not go unperceived by the sharp eyes of the company. "Not otherwise than bowed over, they be," murmured a certain wise matron, acting Chorus to the drama.

Meanwhile, Paternity sniffed danger, fearing awkward questions of dowry to be answered. Would Mr. Ardingthway come with him to see the hollyhocks? By the blaze of an English border the two males sized up each other briskly. "What offers?" asked the swain. Paternity began the time-honoured battle of moneybags, "Two thousand in gold: five hundred down and the balance in the vestry," and was pleasantly surprised when Passion answered "Done," and stood rapturous while daughter to father succeeded in the *tête-à-tête*.

Oh, young love, young love, what a business thou art! Eye looked deep into eye, hand shook hand, the pretty babble of lovers' talk purled through the garden air like a silvery rill. "Miss Jones," said Mr. Ardingthway, "my intentions are approved by your pater." "Mr. Ardingthway," replied Miss Jones, "coyness is for babes. Were you to ask the question which so visibly trembles upon your lips, 'twould be an affirmative for answer." Proudly to the tea-table returned the couple, to receive congratulation on the troth thus plighted.

There is a rift in mortal happiness, into which the gods drive their wedge when in mood for sport. Up the path came Nemesis, disguised as an old apple-woman, her puckered cheeks, trim apron and mellow hair proclaiming her a goody. "Oh, Master Brougham, Master Brougham," she cried, "how it cheers my heart to see my own boy again. Caught sight of him from the road I did and made haste to press him to my arms. I nursed him, gentry all, when that he was no more than a mere stripple all red and chucklesome in his swaddling clothes. Well I remember how 'twas at his Christing when his papa promised his hand to a neighbour for his daughter as was Christed the same day." Mr. Ardingthway staggered like a skiff struck by a Torbay squall. "This hand I pledged not free? This heart not mine to lay at the feet of my choice?" he gasped, frustrated passion scorching his throat. "Felicity, how brittle. Mine own yet not mine own. We women how thin our shields," were some of Miss Jones's comments.

"Who was the girl?" Paternity inquired. "I know not the darling's name," Fidelity replied, "but 'twas a sweet lass and had little eyes brimful of laughing and a mouth like a candied rose-petal." Dumb with her anguish, Miss Jones mechanically poured out cup after cup of the social brew. Drank that day the gossips as never had they drunk before. Half-heeded, Mother Guppy spoke on. "They will make a couple as fair as Lancelot and his Guinevere or Helen and her Paris or Emma and her Rodolphe . . . True, some might hold her birthmark a blemish. 'Tis a heathenish thing for a lass to be so stamped; but what lies between the shoulder-blades is only for a husband's view, though to be sure this modern décolletage . . ."

Paternity clutched at the incredible. "We have never told her," he said, "but my daughter has a birthmark situated thus. Quick, tell me the shape of it." "Tis a quincunx of peonies." High to broad heaven Paternity roared his delight. With hand unstayed by modesty or expense a tea-knife he wielded, and revealed the dorsal passport to wedded bliss. With a wild cry, as of spheres suddenly accelerated, fell into each other's arms the happy twain. "True love's path lacks smoothness and ever did," ran choral comment from our matrons.

I hope that the dénouement of this story will be as great a surprise to my readers as it was to me.

Impending Apology

"Godfrey Winn, the famous novelist, whose first screen story was 'Holiday Camp,' made a personal appearance at the Gaumont, Hammersmith, on Friday night.

Mr. Winn stressed the point that although in the film there is a murder, a couple of spivs, and a girl who has a baby, it is not typical of the majority of the holiday camps."—*Local paper*.

Address Your Reply in Quintuplicate.

"Ambitious Irish Bank Official, 16 years' service, seeks change; will represent you. Can see no prospect Eire Banking Service; will represent you. Too impatient empty shoes; will represent you. Would consider subordinate position while qualifying for executive post or agency; keen interviewer and negotiator; will represent you. Receptive to new ideas and methods; some capital; single, car, keen sport; will represent you."

Advt. in "Irish Times."

Mead

BILL, you have doubtless been rejoiced to read
Of the revival of a drink called Mead,

Or sweetlier, though difficult to spell,
Once known as Metheglin or Hydromel.

"From Barleycorn or Bacchus wholly free"
It is, I learn, the "true juice of the bee"

And to the unsuspecting might appear
A thing of mild and comfortable cheer

Which you in thirsty mood might freely quaff:
My worthy Bill, as people say, not half.

I have an ancient treatise rich in lore
On drinks our fathers loved in days of yore,

And have found much of interest therein
On Mead (or Hydromel or Metheglin).

None of your washes, this: 'tis well described
As the one *strong* drink that our sires imbibed

Which—this refers of course to days gone
by—

"Doth more than any other stupefy."

"One draught a day"; deliberately 'tis said;
E'en two will "keep a humming of the head."

Perchance, O Bill—it's not for me to state—
Our author something doth exaggerate,

Or that this terror when put forth anew
May be a meeker and more seemly brew.

That we shall learn no doubt. I only trow
When the time comes we two will have a
go,

Each with a manly stoup to stay our thirst
And, testing, see whose head starts humming
first,

Proving ourselves the stout old bulldog breed
On Hydromel (or Metheglin or Mead). DUM-DUM.



THERE are a number of weighty reasons why *You Never Can Tell* at Wyndham's should on no account be missed. Item, it is the most exhilarating piece now playing in London, and guaranteed to obliterate for two and a half glorious hours all consciousness of living in a planned State, of broiled whale and cokeless cellars. Item, it is a model Shavian production, in which a hand-picked cast acquires itself superbly. Item, Mr. SHAW's brilliant comedy emerges from its nearly fifty-year-old bandbox as fresh as the day it went in. If he had written nothing else but this his reputation as a great writer for the theatre would still be secure. A regular complaint against him has been that he is too much concerned with the conflict of ideas and too little with life, that his characters are mere mouthpieces for argument. One answer to this is that in the hands of a master ideas can be the most dramatic stuff of all, and another, of which this play is a complete example, is that wit is a better preservative than realism.

If Mr. SHAW had been as interested as some of his contemporaries in giving an exact reflection of the late Victorian scene his work would date as much as theirs, whereas, since his characters are embodied flashes of his own genius, undated and unfading, our delight in them continues without a trace of period condescension.

And make no mistake, these people are real enough, however ironically their reactions are distorted. The old waiter who has nothing left to learn of customers' psychology except that you never can tell, played to perfection by Mr. HARCOURT WILLIAMS; the unwanted father, to whom Mr. FRANCIS LISTER gives an engulping peevishness until the final melting when it is cast aside for a false nose; the finicky old maid of a solicitor, unsparingly drawn by Mr. ERNEST THESIGER, and the pulverizing Q.C., pulverizingly presented by Mr. D. A. CLARKE-SMITH, these are the purest creatures of comedy and their varying assessments of the trials and responsibilities of

At the Play

You Never Can Tell (WYNDHAM'S)—*Cupid and Mars* (ARTS)
The Raven (BOLTONS)

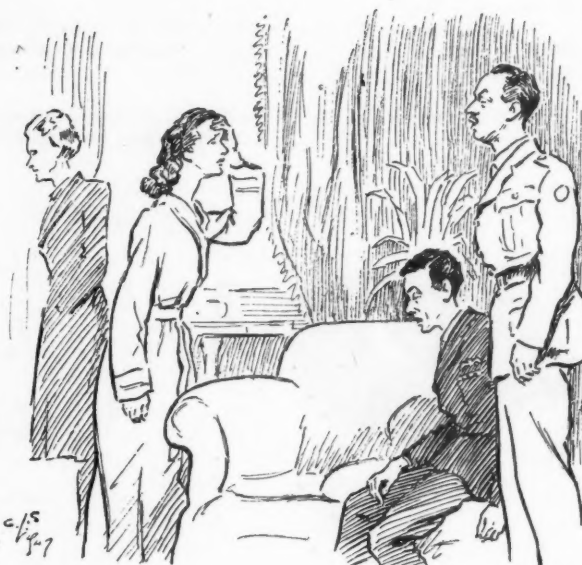
marriage provide the richest entertainment. As for the *Clandons*—beautifully mothered by Miss JANE HENDERSON—Miss BRENDA BRUCE and Mr. DAVID PEEL play the youngsters with magnificent impudence and Miss ROSAMUND JOHN, who has perhaps the least rewarding part in the play, makes acceptable the gradual transition of *Gloria* from prig to human.

Last, but certainly not least, comes the five-shilling dentist, whose in-

ence to see it fresh from *Cupid and Mars*, at the Arts, another play on the same old theme but one in which its ugly head is crudely and unflaggingly reared. As the title suggests, this describes the war-time frolics of whisky-sodden youth on leave; and since the scenes it portrays are best forgotten it would be kindest to dismiss the play in a line if to do so would not be unfair. For, rather maddeningly, Mr. RODNEY ACKLAND and Mr.

ROBERT G. NEWTON have made it funnier than it deserves. In several instances their characterization is deadly, there are many good lines and the situations are piled up with considerable ingenuity. Mr. PETER POWELL handles capably a cast which knows its business; Miss VIOLA LYEL as a back-slapping secretary, Miss HELEN HAYE as an unhappy hypocrite, Miss SUSAN RICHMOND as an immoderately tolerant aunt, Mr. CLIVE MORTON as a husband misunderstood and Miss JESSIE EVANS as a chewer of gum and G.I.s being particularly effective.

At the Bolttons *The Raven* gives a quite inadequate and one-sided picture of a great man, but is not without its points. What with poverty and drink and drugs Edgar Allan Poe was no doubt a difficult man to have about the house, and a doubly tough proposition for a child (he married his cousin of thirteen). At the same time the ranting, posturing fellow described by Mr. JOE BATES SMITH and played by Mr. RICHARD LONGMAN fails to suggest the flowering of a mature and critical mind. The author of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," to mention nothing else, must have been capable of long, clear spells of gruelling work. Mr. LONGMAN alternates too monotonously between violence and remorse. Where he is best, and where the play becomes moving in simple terms, is in Poe's tenderness for his invalid wife, whom Miss HILDA SCHRODER endows with a most touching childishness. ERIC.



(*Cupid and Mars*)

MORNING AT HANGOVER HALL

Mabel Simcox	MISS VIOLA LYEL
Cynthia Cooksey	MISS MARY JONES
Christopher Mackintosh	MR. IAN CARMICHAEL
Charles Poulter	MR. CLIVE MORTON

curable light-heartedness precipitates the whole preposterous affair, and here Mr. JAMES DONALD gives a many-shaded performance of great distinction which strikes and holds a charming balance between flippancy and sentiment.

Every facet of Mr. PETER ASHMORE's production is polished until it sparkles, and Mr. ANTHONY HOLLAND's sets have a quality of satire which exhibits it fittingly. Even if you only see one piece a year, do go to this, into which our greatest living dramatist has crammed enough wit to make twenty passable plays.

At the Ballet

Valses Nobles et Sentimentales
(SADLER'S WELLS)

IN *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*, composed to music by RAVEL, the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet have made a distinguished addition to their repertoire—a repertoire which has hitherto lacked the new ballets of the first order of merit that this young company deserves. FREDERICK ASHTON is the choreographer, and *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* bears the unmistakable cachet of his cultivated style and mature artistry. It is very well danced by the ten dancers, five of each sex, headed by ANNE HEATON, DONALD BRITTON and MICHAEL BOULTON.

It is no easy matter to impose a dance-structure upon a piece of music not primarily intended for the ballet, and to contrive it with such skill and subtle understanding of the interplay of music and dance, and of their emotional effect upon the beholder, that the result is a work of art and not an obvious *pastiche*. As an aesthetic puzzle, it is fascinating to try to discover why, for instance, *Les Sylphides*—"the languid vision of spirits of dead maidens, dancing their dreamy dances among moonlit ruins" in the words of Alexandre Benois—expresses so perfectly the poetry and romantic melancholy of Chopin. One never finds the key to the mystery—the charm would be gone if one did. All that can be said in explanation of it is that somehow it just is so—an explanation that Thomas Morley would have termed "a woman's reason to maintain an opinion, and then if she be asked why she doth so, will answer, because I do so."

Valses Nobles et Sentimentales catches the spirit of RAVEL in the same inexplicable way as *Les Sylphides* expresses that of Chopin—and by the same apparently simple means. FREDERICK ASHTON has used the classical medium, as did Fokine to express a similar poetic idea, and SOPHIE FEDOROVITCH's costumes also recall *Les Sylphides*; but *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* is not a dream of melancholy but one of gaiety and tender romance. The setting is a ballroom with shadows of palms and three transparent screens that effectively suggest coquettish elusiveness when the dancers pose behind them—a charming idea. And here is the only quarrel I have with this delightful production. The setting and costumes are pleasing in themselves, but I cannot "see" RAVEL's music in terms

of a mass of unrelieved raspberry-ice pink and wine red. RAVEL's harmonies and his lilting, wayward rhythms melt into one another and recede to make way for the next in the procession of airy grace. These pink walls and wine-red screens close in on one more and more oppressively the longer one looks at them. Long before the ballet ended I wanted to push them all down and let in the pearly-grey shadows and golden mists whose presence, confined somewhere in the wings, the music suggested so insistently.

Mr. Punch is happy to announce to his younger readers that the first of the ROBERT MAYER CONCERTS FOR CHILDREN will take place at the Central Hall, Westminster, on Saturday morning, October 18th, at 11 o'clock.

* * * * *

These concerts are intended for young hearers; but the list of famous artists and orchestras engaged to explore the wide realms of music during the coming season will tempt older music-lovers too to seek a place on the magic carpet. Early application to the Central Hall, Westminster, for tickets and information is advisable.
D. C. B.

o o

"Waterproofs that leak can be reproved."
Schoolgirl's "Make-Do-and-Mend" Essay.
But some are quite impervious.

o o

"That is the end of the forecast. The weather will follow in a minute and a half."
B.B.C. announcer, 12.58½ p.m., Sept. 27.
Nothing like getting it over . . .



"Six cuts for faulty gear-changing."



"If you'll just sketch in the outlines I'll make up the face and pencil in the eyebrows myself."

Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Mary Colum

Life and the Dream (MACMILLAN, 15/-) is the autobiography of MARY COLUM, wife of the poet and playwright Padraic Colum, who, like herself, is at present teaching literature at Columbia University. Mrs. COLUM has been in the States since 1914, and is amusing and interesting about it in this book, but its best chapters are those which describe the Ireland of her youth. Her account of the Abbey Theatre and its two creators, Lady Gregory and W. B. Yeats, is particularly vivid. Her enthusiasm for Lady Gregory is temperate. She calls her single-minded, but is not much impressed by her mind, and defends her against her critics as follows: "Of course Lady Gregory was a snob, but snobbery did not always rule her life; of course she was ambitious, but ambition was not always her dominant quality." For Yeats, on the other hand, her enthusiasm is almost boundless, and she gives a very striking picture of him during the battle over *The Playboy of the Western World*. "I never," she says, "witnessed a human being fight as Yeats fought that night, nor ever knew another with so many weapons in his armory." Her portrait of James Joyce is more detailed than her account of Yeats, calmer and somewhat more convincing. He was, she says, the one member of his family with much practical sense, and expended much time and energy on their requirements. He emerges from her account as not only a man of genius but also a touching and tragic human being.

H. K.

The Man Who Would Fain Coin Wisdom.

A man who, if he is allowed to possess his own soul, cares little how much else he leaves to others, may be fitly summed up as *The Unselfish Egoist* (LONGMANS, 10/6). This is the title bestowed by his friend Châteaubriand on

Joseph Joubert; and Miss JOAN EVANS retains it in the first complete English life of the last great *pensée*-writer. Much research has illuminated Joubert's obscure career since Sainte-Beuve, Matthew Arnold and Saintsbury introduced his *Pensées* to a more meditative England than ours. Miss EVANS has been so far beguiled by this wealth of material—her own charming sketches of Joubert's Périgord, an admirably-documented revolutionary Paris—as to tend to merge her hero in his background. What still enkindles—and will always enkindle—is his spiritual quest among the labyrinthine philosophy, theology, literature, politics and pedagogy of his day; the psychological insight of his conclusions; and the exquisite economy of their presentment. A novice in Toulouse, an atheist in Paris, Joubert joined the Council of Napoleon's new university and returned to his faith and his wife's native Villeneuve before he died at seventy-four. He had challenged most of his age's hypocrisies—even some of his own. "Of the two," he said, "I prefer those who make vice lovable to those who degrade virtue."

H. P. E.

The American at Home

That one-man fact-finding commission, Mr. JOHN GUNTHER, has now probed into three whole continents and may already be at work on either Africa or Australasia. His latest probe started in 1940, gathered impetus in 1944, and finally produced *Inside U.S.A.* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 21/-), a document of nearly a thousand meaty pages. And there is much more to come in a second volume, for Washington, D.C., is to have a special probe all of its own. The chief merit of Mr. GUNTHER's quick-fire literary method is that it presents hard facts in a most assimilable form. But the danger of offering too much fodder to the generalizers should not be overlooked. Thumbing rapidly through this tremendous book one may find startling factual support for almost every misconception as well as every truth about American affairs and the American way of life. So, "... the law forbidding evolution to be taught still stands on the books of the sovereign state of Tennessee," "Thirty-three companies . . . were convicted in May, 1946, for conspiring to fix prices and block improvement in artificial limbs for war veterans," "... in the U.S. there are 2,800,000 vegetarians, 60,000 amateur radio operators, and 25,000 practising astrologers," "Women's shoes in 1946 were obtainable in 160 different sizes. But 40 per cent. of all American homes have no bath-tub or shower, 35 per cent. have no indoor toilet and 30 per cent. have no running water," and so on, and on, and on. After a few days with this monumental collection of headlines, startling revelations, home truths and absurdities the mind reels, and even the information (quoted from the *New Republic*) that Elizabeth Scott patriotically dropped the "E" in her name during the war "to conserve newsprint" fails to make much impression. Still, the book is worth a guinea of anybody's money if only for its portraits of Stassen, Kaiser, Dewey, LaGuardia, the T.V.A., and Wall Street.

A. B. H.

Potted History of the Ballet

It is interesting to be reminded by Mr. DERYCK LYNHAM in *Ballet Then and Now* (SYLVAN PRESS, 25/-) of a quip by Gaetano Vestris concerning his son Marie-Auguste, reported by Madame Vigée le Brun: "If my son comes to earth it is only out of courtesy to his colleagues." A pity too, perhaps, because the young who never saw Nijinsky may more readily discount the opinion of us veterans concerning that dancer's apparent defiance of the laws of gravity as a piece of traditional nonsense. And we know better!

Mr. LYNHAM has produced an exceptionally compact and comprehensive reference book of the ballet, its origins, history and later developments. Test it where you will for any ballet as far back almost as *Le Roi Soleil*, and you will find date, title, choreographer, designer, composer and dancers, often with the opinions of instructed contemporaries. You will find also perceptive comment on matters within the author's experience with an absence of that ill-regulated enthusiasm which makes the judicious grieve. This is much more than a painstaking compilation of bare facts. Notes, appendices, index (admirably organized), all are valuable. Among the illustrations are interesting reproductions of old engravings and fewer of those "stills" of ballet ensembles which are so unrevealing. But when will publishers, even ambitious publishers, learn that a line of fifteen to eighteen words is much too long to be read without fatigue? The author has our sympathy. J. P. T.

Albert Schweitzer

In *Albert Schweitzer: The Man and his Mind* (BLACK, 15/-) Mr. GEORGE SEAVER has given a thorough and most absorbing account of a wonderful man, whose combination of scholarship, practical ability and courage, and selflessness it would be difficult to parallel in the whole history of human achievement. Schweitzer, who, at the age of seventy-three is still working in his hospital at Lambaréné in equatorial Africa, was born in Alsace, and while at Strasburg University read theology and philosophy and also mastered the organ and began to study Bach, on whom he later wrote (in French, though his native tongue was German) what is accepted as a masterpiece of interpretative criticism. When he was nearly forty, partly as a result of the study of the Gospels which resulted in his book, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, he went to Africa as a medical missionary. "He had," Mr. SEAVER writes, "no interest . . . in the negro as such; he only knew there were primitive people . . . dying of diseases caused by the neglect, and more than the neglect, of white men." The immense practical difficulties with which he had to contend are vividly described. He was often melancholy, and the strain sometimes proved almost too great even for his extraordinary physical strength. What he went through may be inferred from his confession—"Only at quite rare moments have I felt really glad to be alive." What has sustained him is his experience that only in mitigating the pain of others can a man alleviate his own. H. K.

Farming: The Shady Side

The basic problem as to whether any other nation wants to feed a country that has no intention of feeding itself, is yet to be solved. Between the two world wars England decided that serious food-production could be relegated to others, but that a few "protective" foods, such as milk, fruit and vegetables, could still be mass-produced at home. Mr. ROBERT A. HOMEWOOD tells how an ardent young farmer, starting in these unpropitious circumstances, fared on *Three Farms* (LATIMER HOUSE, 9/6). He also describes a visit to Canada, when, revolting against his Sussex milk-factory, he disbanded his prize Frisian herd and went out to prospect. Farming in Canada, he found, was left to the "poor sap" who could not get in on mining or lumber. With his town-bred wife he then rented a genteel Kentish fruit-farm and was defeated by middlemen and disease. His third venture found the providential war to back it; and though bad and inadequate food ruined his Jerseys, he went back to Frisians on the approved quantity *versus* quality lines, and is still doing well. Perhaps

the saddest feature of his depressing but valuable chronicle is the total disappearance of the skilled contented carters and cowmen who guided his first stumbling endeavours.

H. P. E.

Mr. Darlington Remembers.

To have been out middle stump in youth to a young soldier named Alexander, later to take sterner wickets; to have made but one orchestral appearance, and that as tympanist's mate at the first performance in England of *The Magic Flute*; or to have shattered the cloistered misogynism of John's (Cambridge) with a fetching nurse during a mumpish tripos—it is hard to say which was the more felicitous beginning to a career enviably described by Mr. W. A. DARLINGTON as *I Do What I Like* (MACDONALD, 15/-). A quiet, happy childhood and a father of formidable learning gave a fair wind to his natural facility in classics. At Shrewsbury a common love of Alice brought him friendship with Dr. Alington, and as a scholar of John's he had the fortune to work under T. R. Glover and to have Q, just launching the new school of English, almost to himself. The Granta; rowing and cricket; a little schoolmastering; and then the war, in which a wound gave him time and Owen Seaman encouragement to set about writing seriously. "Alf's Button" sealed his future, and when, in the first years of peace, he had edited the *World* for a short time, the dramatic criticism of the *Daily Telegraph*, which he has now written with distinction for twenty-seven years, fell into his lap, by one of those happy chances to which most critics seem to owe their start. Two main threads run through this charming and modest autobiography—the theatre and cricket; and while he tells many good stories of the Cryptics, the Incogs, and of J. C. Squire's incomparable Invalids, it is his great knowledge of the modern stage and its people, expressed in sane and humorous commentary, which will give the book its widest interest. E. O. D. K.

Prisoner of Nippon

"The deadly monotony of Prison Camp life," states the blurb of *White Coolie* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 10/6), "did not come Hastain's way." But of course, inevitably, it did; and a fair measure of it comes also the way of the reader. In a praiseworthy effort to avoid horrors—and perhaps to rid his memory of the petty bitternesses which were more degrading than prison itself—Mr. RONALD HASTAIN gives us a tale of life in the hands of the Japanese which has little more flavour than successive meals of rice and vegetable stew. Yet he had a rough time; he went to all the places which any ex-prisoner knows were places to avoid, and he kept a staid mental balance. But he runs through his experiences as a stock character among stock characters. His British soldier companions are steadfast and heroic; the officers' upper lips stiff and trimly moustached: his Japanese guards are either brutal or kindly, nothing more complex; and their senior officers are dimly and decently "of the old school." All this is a pity, for the absorbing feature of prison life was the degree by which characters changed, for better or worse, after the fall from grace. When reporting what he saw, Mr. HASTAIN is fair if not unduly accurate. (The spelling of place names is shaky, and some uses of local terms are in the howler class.) When he tries to express his feelings he is naïve, even for a Britisher abroad. "A meteor is an awesome sight and made one's own petty being and dilemma fade into insignificance." He leaves the best to the end. The description of the miracle of liberation is moving enough, and one is left feeling that for Mr. HASTAIN, as for many another prisoner, this was the only event for which there was any emotion left. E. R. K.



"Why do they keep on teaching you all this Latin now that you can't go abroad?"

Up a Mountin

By Smith Minor

ONE wonders if the gentel reader has ever climed a mountin? Mind you, it's got to be a thousand (1,000) feet high, becorse if it's only nine hundred and ninety-nine (999) feet it's a hill and dosen't count.

If he or she hasn't yet I advise him or her to do it before it is too late. A man told me once that when you get beyond a certin age, I'm not sure what it is, but he being beyond, something hapens to your knees wich makes it more difficult. Your eyes may get wonky, too, so that

"Far vallies wich below you are
Seam twice the distance that they
are."

Of corse that's not how he put it, but it's how I am putting it.

Anyhow, Green and I thort we'd have a shot at it this year, we hapening to be spending our lateish holiday in what you call a mountinous distrikt not smoothe enough for cricket. Mind you, being in Wales, we were almost a

thousand feet up before we started, but as the mountin we were going to clime was more than a thousand feet more we desided we cuold say we had climed one, that is, if we did.

It's always best to clime in cupples, becorse then if one falls over the mountin the other can go and tell someone, unless they are tied together, in wich case he can't. When you are tied together you do it with rope, string's no good, and Green and I had a long tork to deside if we'd do it, I wanting to and he not.

"It seams to me a silly idea," he said, "becorse if one of us goes over he's more likely to pull the other one down than the other is to pull him up."

"I agree," I said.

"Then why be tied together?" he said.

"Well, if you were to go down," I said, "what wuold I feel like not going down, too?"

"But supose you are the one to go down," he said, "it wuoldn't help you

if I went down, too, I'd rather stay alive and remember you."

In the end we desided that we'd start not being tied together, but we'd take some rope with us in case we felt like it later.

Now you'll want to know the name of the mountin we climed, but I can't be quite sure becorse after I got back to where I live (I now being back), I exchanged the map with another boy for the Comp of Compton's autograph, he'd lost the ton, and the name was a bit difficult to remember. I know the first part was Mole, that being Welch for Mountin, but the other part was longer, something like Llanllan-fairfachllolliog, anyhow, that's what I'll call it.

Well, came the time to start, and off we went, armed as they say with (1) the rope, (2) two bottles of gingerbeer, (3) 24 sanwiches, becorse hunger encreases with hight, and (4) a horse-shoe, I thort we might take one along.

The first part was easy, and therefore

dull, not to us, I mean, but to you, becouse it's a funny thing, but reading only gets interesting when things go wrong, Green saying that's why there wuoldn't be any books in a perfect world, he therefore not wanting one, but I not being sure, but anyway I won't bore you till it got steaper and I stubed my toe and had to sit down on a bolder and work it up and down* till it got bnumb enough not to feel anything.

While I was doing it Green said, "If you write an article about our clime, young Smith, don't forget to put this in, it's what they'll be waiting for," and then a funny thing hapened, you may of been waiting for this, too, but anyhow, hardly had his voice seased, as they say, when he stepped on a long thin black stick, and thinking it was a snake he stubed his toe, so now you've got them both.

It was after this that the clime began to get realy difficult, in fact, if I were you, I'd think twice before trying Mole Llanllanfairfachllolllliog. You see, at first it looks easy, that's why you try it, but jest as you are saying to yourself, "Poo, what's a mountin?" lo! your path has gone, and in its place is

"A large and jagged looming rock
Wich says, 'Ho, thou! Thy way
I block'!"

(the last line of the above is by Green), and when you have maniged to get round it you soon come to another, and then another, till lo again! it is nothing but rocks! And mind you, I don't mean rocks like you get at, say, Margate, but piled on top of each other in every shape and size like, well, like they were. Honestly it makes you feal *un peu* dizzy, that is, if you are not good on hights, I not being. It was when we got as far as this that I said,

"What about that rope?"

"It's an idea," said Green, "and another idea wuold be to go back."

But to go back didn't look much easier than to go on.

"Do you think we cuold?" I said.

"You can try anything," he said.

"But what wuold poeple say if we did?" I said.

"Ah, what?" he said.

"You can't get away from it," I said.

So we tied ourselves together, Green now agreeing it wuold be better to share whatever was coming, and went on. The top of Mole Llanllanfairfachllolllliog was now closer to us, thouth still a long way off.

It's a funny fealing, walking with a

rope. You realy want to know how to do it, wich we didn't. We had hardly started before we had to stop becouse the part between us had got louped round a rock behind us. Then, when we'd gone back and unlouped it, we tried another way, the one ahead now pulling the one behind till he was behind and cuold be pulled ahead, but this poughed us, so next we tried tying ourselves very close together, but we then fealing as if we had four legs with two not ours, we gave up using the rope.

We now had to begin leeping, and in a way you might say that did for us. You see, we only did the first leep by taking a run first, and when we got there, there wasn't any run the other way, so we cuoldn't of lept back if we'd wanted to, wich we did.

After about fourteen more leeps, 11 small ones and 3 big ones, I suddenly said, "Look!"

"How can I?" said Green, he still having his arms round the last rock he'd lept to.

"Then don't till you can," I said, "but cheer up, old boy, I can see the top jest looming above us!"

When he cuold, he said, "Young Smith, how sweet life has sudenly become! Now all we have to do is to make five more leeps, walk along a ledge, turn upside down and be a fly on a sealing, swim round a funnel, and then sit on a spike and sing 'God Save the King.'"

"I think we ouht to be serious," I said.

"I have never felt more serious," he said, "but all good soljiers make jokes."

"I see what you mean," I said.

Now, I am not going to discribe the last bit of our clime, becouse (1) it wuold make you anxious, like we were, and (2) I cuoldn't, anyhow, becouse I don't know it myself. When anything orful is going to hapen I've got a way of making my mind a blanque, and then I never know I'm doing it till I've done it, if I have. I made my mind a blanque now, and the next thing I remembered was hearing Green say, "Oi, wake up, we're there!"

And, lo! we were!

There was jest room for the two of us, and the first thing we did, after singing "God Save the King," was to tie ourselves to the spike. As a matter of fact, I think that's what the rope must really be for. Then, fealing jolly peckish, becouse the top of Mole Llanllanfairfachllolllliog is 2,008 feet up, and we reckoned that your hunger dubbles at every thousand, we desided to eat our 24 sanwiches in one fell swoop.

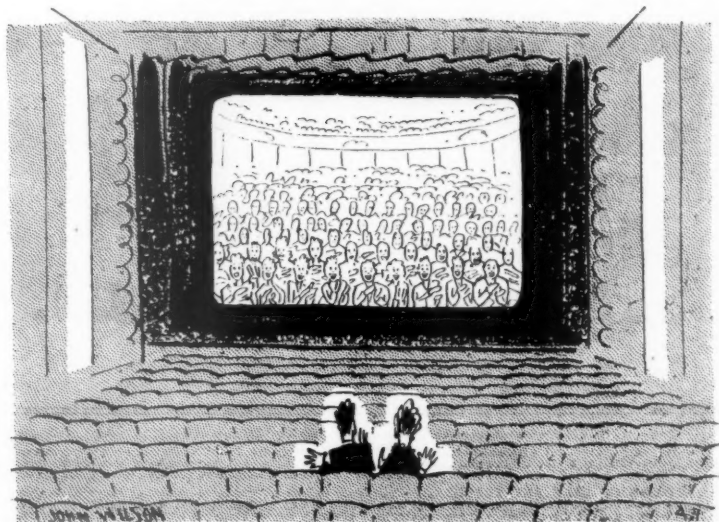
But when we felt in our pockets they weren't there, nor was the lemonade! They must of dropped out when we were doing the bit like flies.

All that was left was the horse-shoe.

Now I expect the reader is thinking, "However did they get down again on empty stummicks?" wich is what we were thinking, too. Well, I'm afraid the end is going to disapoint you, thouth it didn't disapoint us. When we looked over the top, we found that the other side of Mole Llanllanfairfachllolllliog was a gentel slope right down to the bottom!!

"Young Smith," said Green, "let's have a jolly good cry."

And, do you know, it sounds silly, but we did.



* My toe. Author.

More Industrial Relations

IT is high time, I suppose, that I reported on the new cost-of-living index. For the past few weeks the Suggestions Box just outside my door has been full of it, so full, indeed, that I have had to introduce two new collections—at 11.15 A.M. just after the mid-morning break for music and "Cocovit," and at 5.0 A.M. when morale among the night-shift workers is at a dangerously low ebb.

As Welfare and Industrial Relations Officer of this great industrial undertaking, the Snacker and Diplocket Small Things Co. (1928), Ltd., I can state with some authority that the new index has had a very mixed reception. Those of my correspondents who confuse it with cradle-to-grave insurance and the cost-of-dying index drawn up by the undertakers, funeral directors and morticians believe that it marks another step towards total regimentation. Others welcome it enthusiastically, confident that all shortages will disappear as soon as they are officially recognized. And there are others, again, who approach the index warily but say quite openly that it invites comparison.

But the cost-of-living index is not the only topic of interest among the workers. Once again, therefore, I plunge my hand into the box . . .

The first note comes from a Mr. Saul Sykes, senior fuel-watcher in the casting-shop. He writes: "I observe with feelings of the utmost alarm and disgust that the night-shift workers always come on duty several minutes after the day-shift workers have left for home. Thus there is a significant break in production-flow during which machines stand idle, dust settles and

depreciation sets in. This cannot be allowed to continue.

"Some years ago we had similar trouble up at Braddleigh in the North Yorkshire and District Cricket League. The incoming batsmen would always wait for the outcoming batsmen to reach the dressing-room ('Which way's he turning 'em?') before setting forth to the wicket, and this delay reduced effective playing time by as much as fifty minutes on a Saturday afternoon. We soon put the matter right, however, and I suggest that similar tactics would work here at Snackers. Why not get some such notice as this displayed prominently throughout the works?

THE INGOING SHIFT MUST MEET
THE OUTGOING SHIFT AT THE
GATE.

By Order.

Persistent offenders should be rebuked three times and then penalized."

"This new cost-of-living index," writes Miss Thelma Harris, capstan-minder in "Z" shop, "is a monstrous piece of bureaucratic extravagance. The economists say that the old index is hopelessly inaccurate since we now consume far less starch and far more milk, vegetables and fruit than we did in 1904. Less starch! More fruit! Why there's so much starch-heaviness in this shop that we walk in constant dread of subsidence. And as for fruit! Well, the last I heard of the stuff was when I read about an M.P. being remanded, reprimanded or something for sucking an orange uncovered* in

* The M.P., of course.

the House of Commons. It would be rather fun if you could induce some of these economists to come out to the factory and give us a few pep-talks. Do your best!"

The third note is brief and very much to the point. It says, "Our target for 1947—the Directors," and is signed in neat block letters "Fellow Traveller."

Next comes a somewhat disappointed epistle from a Mr. Colin ("Dirt-track") Gilpin, shuttle-boom driver in the welding shed. He writes: "I have just been reading about in Russia it seems they give top-notch workers first bash at the canteen surely we could do likewise here. I know there's not much going but some would welcome cups with handles uncharred toast a peep under the counter dry change tea without saccharin oh there must be quite a lot of little privileges. Don't go thinking I'm trying to feather my own nest I work hard enough incentives or no incentives for King and Country and private enterprise is grossly under-rated."

Finally, there is a message from Mr. Diplocket himself. "I want you to get busy immediately and put a stop to these malicious rumours about the directors being involved in a B.B.C. inquiry into bribery and corruption. Neither Mr. Snacker nor myself has ever received one penny in connection with the 'Workers' Playtime' programmes. The B.B.C. do not consult us in any way and we do not recommend artists to them. The man, Morgan, who spread it about that he had been hired expressly to whistle applause at these programmes has been given the sack."

Hod.

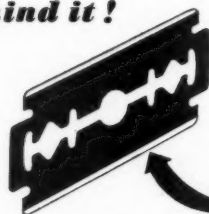


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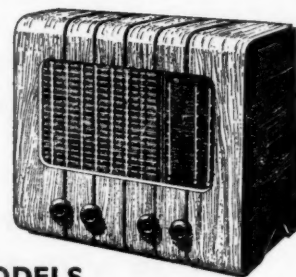


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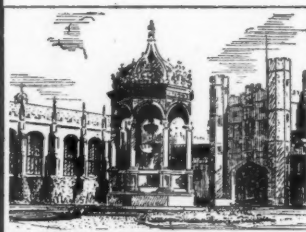
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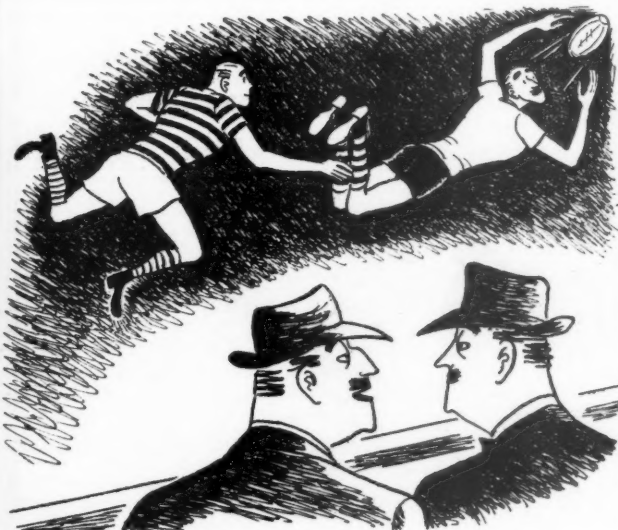
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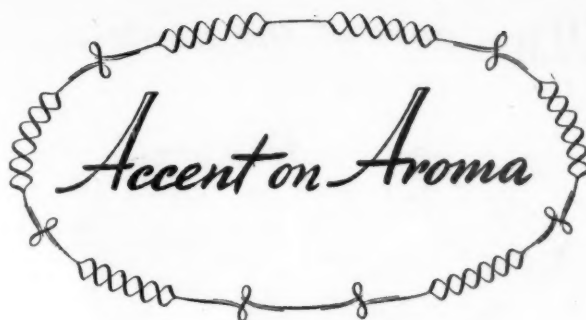


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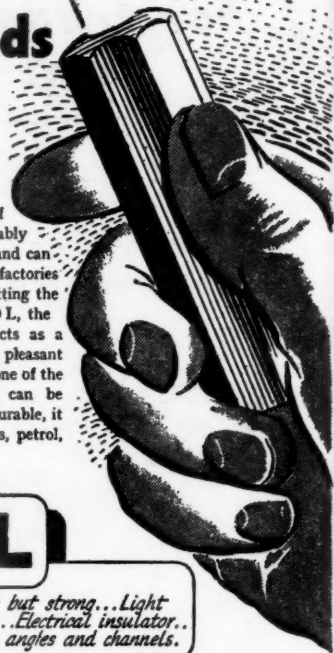
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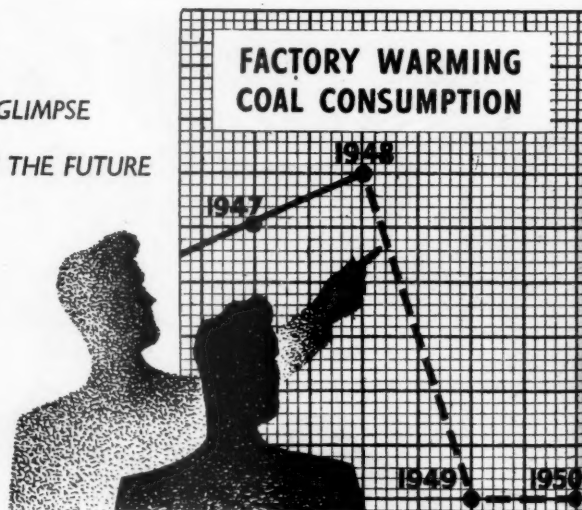


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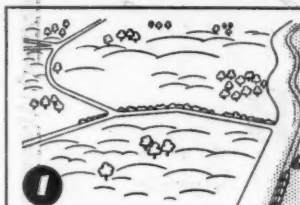
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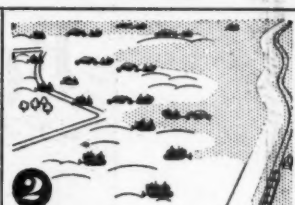
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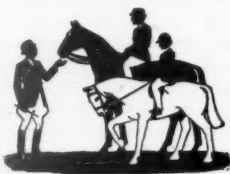


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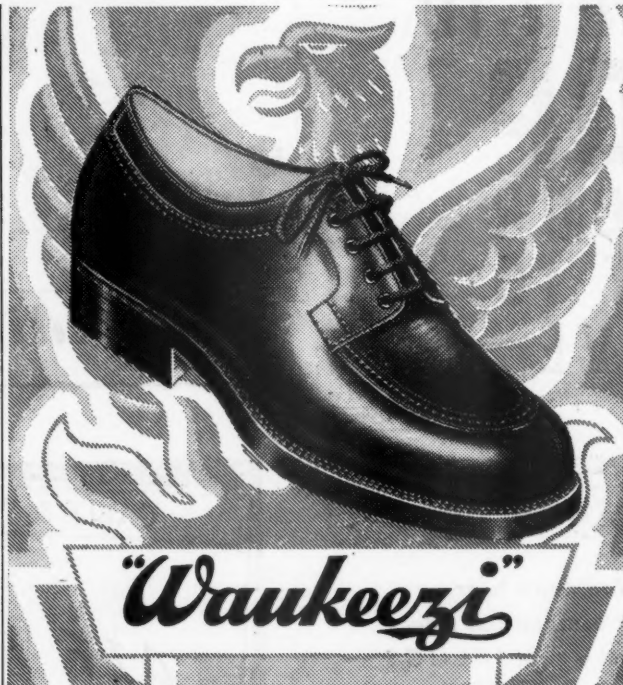
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one



two



three



four



five



six



seven!



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